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USSR Report

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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24 January 1986

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

EVENTS LEADING TO ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON DESCRIBED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 5, Sep-Oct 85 pp 8-13

[Article by Serghei Maximov]

[Text] On that cloudy Sunday morning, February 17, 1985, everyone, as if by mutual consent, set out from Beirut along the coastal road leading south to Saida. The previous night Israeli Merkava tanks, which had for many months been guarding the bridge across the Awali River that separated the occupied south from the rest of the country, had left the city. The aggressor's lackeys from the puppet "South Lebanese army" led by Antoine Lahad, sensing they were in for it, had fled like rats several days before their masters' departure. Saida could now be entered and at dawn hundreds and perhaps even thousands of cars, including ours, filled the long-deserted coastal highway. It tossed them about on the craters left by shells and twisted at turns but dutifully carried the stream of cars to the southern capital, as Saida is called by the Lebanese.

Pushing their way through the neck of the bridge and numerous check points set up by the regular Lebanese army, which had entered the city somewhat earlier, the cars poured into large square called Nadjma (Star Square).

The Sweet Word "Freedom"

Columns of demonstrators, hand in hand, marched into the square from the opposite direction. They were led by prominent Saida residents--MPs, political and religious leaders--protected by activists from local public organizations. In their wake came a colourful and noisy crowd carrying national flags and the portraits of leaders of various parties. People chanted slogans and greetings, crying in unison, "Freedom and independence to the homeland!" Catching sight of journalists, photographers and cameramen, they raised their hands as one man, signaling V for victory. The incredible howl of sirens, clanking of armoured carriers and bursts of sub-machine-guns fired into the air merged and became for the residents of Saida and all of the Lebanese a sweet melody of liberation.

Choosing at random, we entered the first office on the square whose bullet-ridden sign, which had been hastily affixed to the building with adhesive tape, said "Transportation Agency" and showered its manager, Rashid Habbi, with questions:

"How was contact with Beirut maintained when Saida was occupied?"

"Only by telephone. By car you had to go in a round about way and you could never be sure you'd reach your destination. The Israelis had cut off the south of the country completely."

"And what was life like for the residents of Saida?"

"After midday all the shops and offices were closed, as Israel's accomplices from Lahad's army often went out into the streets. They would fire at random from under the cover of two or three Merkava tanks. Sometimes enemy armoured personnel carriers would block off several streets, the invaders would throw around package bombs, then allege that Lebanese 'terrorists' were responsible for the act and use this provocation as a pretext for mass repression. After 6 p.m. we were in a constant state of fear. Anyone out on the streets late at night risked being arrested by the Israeli secret service. Lahabs's hirelings could break into any house. They taunted citizens and took them to the commandant's headquarters on the slightest suspicion that they belonged to the resistance movement. Some of them were never seen again. Fear drove people into their houses. In two years' time I haven't seen so many people on the streets as I do today. Today's a real holiday!"

Mahmud Baba, the owner of the inn next door, added, "A new life is beginning. Apparently, the Israelis finally realised that the Lebanese people could not be subjugated and had to start withdrawing their troops. We want our land, all 10,452 square kilometres of it and not an inch less. That is what many people from Saida have been and are fighting for. You must have heard of Mustafa Maarufe Saad," he said, turning to us. "A real patriot!"

We nodded in agreement, immediately recalling the details of the recent explosion at Saad's home. The house or rather what remained of it was situated at the very end of a narrow and solitary lane. When we visited it eye-witnesses told us:

"Israeli secret service agents often searched the house and kept the front door under constant surveillance from three different positions in neighbouring buildings and so they knew the fated hour that Mustafa [the leader of the progressive People's Nasserite organisation.--Auth.] received his friends. A car entered the cul-de-sac, pulled up to the house, an unknown driver hastily left it and soon a deafening explosion occurred. (Later experts were to estimate by the 1,5 m deep crater that the explosion was equivalent to a 125 kg TNT charge) One wall collapsed and bits of glass sprayed in every direction. The explosion took two lives, including that of Mustafa's daughter. Thirty people sustained injuries. Mustafa lost his eyesight and only one of his wife's eyes could be saved. The invaders and their assistants failed to attain the chief goal of their crime: they were unable to deprive the city's national patriotic forces of their leaders."

...Shocked by what we had seen and heard, we returned to the square. On their first day of freedom the residents of Saida drove away anxious thoughts

concerning their future. Few suspected that a mere three days later Zionist criminals would put southern Lebanon, and Saida in particular, through cruel new trials.

Operation "Mailed Fist"

Beginning on February 20 Israel started to implement a plan code-named Mailed Fist. From a military and political point of view, it was different from other operations in that it was carried out when Tel Aviv, for the first time in the history of its aggressions, had been forced to withdraw from occupied Arab lands under mounting pressure from the Lebanese national patriotic resistance front. The intense guerrilla war which had broken out in the occupied south rather than "good-will" as Tel Aviv is trying to assert, prompted the Israeli leadership, figuratively speaking, to give its forces the signal with one hand to start a stage-by-stage withdrawal primarily from Saida. With the other, the "mailed fist" of repression and murderous terror, it began cold-bloodedly to trample down the emergent popular discontent that the invaders had themselves sowed.

In the early hours of February 21, 17, Israeli armoured personnel carriers and Tzahal tanks appeared in the village of Deir Kanun el-Nahr. Soldiers burst into houses, conducting general searches in an attempt to find arms and to neutralise the patriots' military bases. The peaceful inhabitants of the village hurled stones at the invaders. The fascist-style thugs drove the people to the village square and staged a mass interrogation while sappers blew up the homes of the suspects and a bulldozer flattened the ruins. Later it was learned that the houses had been marked beforehand on Israeli aerial photographs. Similar "preventive measures", as they were cynically described by a spokesman for the occupying army in Lebanon, were taken simultaneously in other villages.

The Israelis surrounded the city of Tyre and the neighbouring villages, leaving about 75,000 people without food or fuel within several weeks.

"Surgery had used up nearly all of the oxygen bags but I was denied permission to get new supplies in Saida," said Dr. Ahmed Mrue, who works in one of the city's hospitals. "Entry to Tyre from the north, from the direction of Saida, was closed even, as it turned out, for a funeral procession. The Shiite relatives of the deceased had to work many kilometres, carrying the coffin in their hands. And still everything that happened then was but an overture of the monstrous orgy of violence that Israel later unleashed.

Somebody informed a punitive expedition that resistance fighters could be found in the village of Maarakya. On Saturday, March 2, a large subdivision entered the village.

"They beat me with sticks, trying to find out where the patriots' leaders were," one of the villagers, Ibragim Suri, said subsequently. "But I held my tongue and the others did, too. The brutes began to blow up the houses of the 'suspects'. When two French soldiers from the UN Peacekeeping Forces tried to stop them the Israelis went into a wild rage and threatened to blow

them up, too, together with the buildings. They turned everything upside down in the mosque and the husseina (the Shiite educational centre) but failed to find anything and left, blocking the approaches to the village.

"On Monday, at 10:30 a.m. when the local authorities were attending a meeting in the library on the second floor of the husseina to decide how to distribute food relief and people crowded outside the building an explosion occurred. The second floor slowly sank, burying the dead and the living. Disfigured and mutilated bodies were pulled from the debris. Those who had been seriously injured needed blood transfusions. On learning this, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages decided to go to Maarakya but most of them ran into Israeli machine-guns as did the Red Cross representatives. The bloody consequence of that "preventive operation" staged by Tel Aviv was 18 dead and more than 30 wounded.

Four days passed and then on March 8 a powerful explosion (20 kg TNT) shook the densely populated residential area of Bir el-Abed in a southern Shiite suburb of Beirut. A high rise collapsed. Bent cars, people rushing about in search of their near and dear ones and charred corpses could be seen in the light of the fire that had broken out. All through the night ambulances and civil defence vehicles, sirens wailing, shuttled between the scene of the explosion, hospitals and morgues. Sixty-two people died and about 200 were wounded.... Analysing the facts, the local press came to the unanimous conclusion that the "mysterious explosion" was carried out by accomplices of Israel on its direct orders.

On Tuesday March 12, a broadcast of the latest news came on the TV. Cold white plastic bags, which only vaguely resembled shrouds, were placed in a row. Then a grief-stricken crowd lifted them up, crying out in despair and hurling curses at the Israeli aggressor, and carried the bodies to a cemetery. They buried the inhabitants of Zraria who had been barbarously slaughtered the day before. In scale that crime probably exceeded any other punitive action taken by the invaders in southern Lebanon.

Zraria had already been abandoned by Israeli troops when Lebanese regular army units entered it. Late in the night, however, an Israeli detachment tried to burst into the village to take vengeance upon its residents for actions by guerrillas in the neighbourhood. Upon encountering resistance from the Lebanese army aided by the local population, the invaders called for assistance. A landing force was dropped into the hills near the village, which found itself surrounded. At daybreak the butchers opened fire on the homes of peaceful villagers. They took their time committing their atrocities, squashing everything animate or inanimate in their path with their tanks including cars with passengers inside and houses. To cover up their tracks, they opened fire on the journalists who had hurried to Zraria and obstructed all attempts by the Red Cross to help the wounded. An Israeli TV announcer later on reported that "34 guerrilla terrorists were killed in the course of that operation and nearly a hundred of the village's inhabitants were arrested."

One would have seen the eyes of the children who saw their fathers, mothers and elder brothers leave on their last journey and the hands raised to the sky

in futile supplication to be able to fully grasp the cruel hypocrisy of the invaders who had elevated terrorism to the status of government policy.

"The Army has been given strict instruction with respect to maintaining restraint. Nevertheless violence breeds violence and nothing can be done about it," said General Secretary of the Israeli Foreign Ministry David Kimche in an attempt to justify the Israeli crimes. Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, on the other hand, threw diplomacy to the winds, cynically hailing the members of the punitive expedition: "You did a good job in Zraria!"

Israel's rulers and brass would hardly have dared to do what they did without Washington's patronage. At the start of Operation Mailed Fist Lebanon lodged a complaint with the UN Security Council over Israel's criminal activities, demanding an immediate end to the terror. But once again the United States supported its "strategic ally" when Warren Clarke, U.S. representative to the UN, declared that Lebanon's appeal to the Security Council is not the best way to restore Lebanese sovereignty over the occupied territory.

One day after the Zraria massacre, on March 12, the U.S. vetoed a Security Council resolution denouncing the violence perpetrated by Israel in southern Lebanon. Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Karame voiced a firm protest against that step and the aggressor's monstrous crimes:

"The enemy's use of fascist methods shows that it has gone mad. It attacks civilians with barbaric ruthlessness, and spares neither religious centres, schools, nor the homes of civilians killing women, children and old people. The entire world has had a chance to see that the aggressor no longer respects laws or international principles. As for the Lebanese national resistance, it is performing its duty in keeping with its legitimate right to defend itself."

The Grapes of Wrath

This August Sanaa Yusef Mhaidli would have been just seventeen years old. She had her whole life ahead of her. But she willed it differently.

On April 9, a subdivision of Israeli tanks and motorised infantry carried out another punitive operation near Tyre. Six hours later a car appeared on the Butter-Jezzin road north-east of the city, heading in the direction of an Israeli patrol. The occupation army moved in southern Lebanon with great caution: every hammock might conceal a mine planted by resistance fighters; shots could be fired from behind any bush or from any passing car. But on that occasion the soldiers, showed no anxiety on seeing the approaching Peugeot 504: there was nobody inside, apart from the driver, a young woman. When she reached the convoy, Sanaa veered sharply to the left, sending the car loaded with 200 kg of explosives into the armoured personnel carriers. The girl died, killing and wounding several invaders. She was repeating the exploit of Abu Zeinab who shortly before that had plunged his car carrying a deadly cargo into an enemy fighting column, as well as that performed by other young people who had blown themselves up together with some of the hateful invaders.

In the evening, after the event had been made public, Lebanese television broadcast Sanaa's last interview which had been video taped. Viewers heard the calm and resolute voice of the beautiful young Lebanese girl who said, "I have chosen the road of self-sacrifice because I have experienced the humiliation to which my compatriots are subjected under the invaders' yoke. I am calm as I take this step because I have made my choice in the name of my land and my people."

Hundreds and thousands of Lebanese have made a similar choice. From time to time newspapers and the posters which appear in Beirut and other cities and villages carry new names together with short and simple biographies of young boys and girls who have given their lives for their country's freedom. Young people who belonged to the most diverse faiths, to various progressive parties and organisations....

The grapes of wrath are ripe. The number of attacks by the patriots on the Israeli invaders has been mounting, like an avalanche---while the Lebanese resistance movement carried out an average of 60 to 70 operations a month in 1984, last March there were 226. The patriots are strong in that virtually the entire population is behind them. Hiding transmitting devices under their veils, elderly women station themselves near the highways and inform the fighters of the appearance of the enemy, while ubiquitous boys on bicycles and motorcycles carry messages between detachments and priests keep weapons in their homes.

The further the invaders withdrew southward the more Antoine Lahad's mercenary army, cobbled together by the Israelis, fell apart before everybody's eyes. After withdrawing from Saida, a little over 1,000 of the more than 2,000-strong army remained: some deserted, others were taken prisoner and still others went over to the resistance fighters.

The withdrawing invaders had to do something about the notorious Ansar concentration camp outside Nabatieh. In early April West Beirut saluted the arrival of former Ansar inmates in the capital. But Tel Aviv had freed only 752 prisoners, transferring the remaining 1,131 to prisons and concentration camps on the Israeli territory, despite protests by the Lebanese and world public.

An officer in the occupation army who wished to remain anonymous gave reporters the following data: 40 per cent of the more than 1,800 prisoners had been put behind barbed wire on a charge of armed resistance to the Israelis. Another 40 per cent had been charged with distributing anti-Israeli propaganda while the remaining 20 per cent had been arrested merely for belonging to organisations hostile to Israel. The interviewee sensibly passed over in silence the conditions in which the inmates were kept. Those who managed to escape that hell told their story. One of them told reporters that Israeli patrolmen sometimes tied prisoners to armoured personnel carriers to protect themselves from attacks and bombs.

"We were often deprived of sleep and food for long periods of time in order to make us talk during interrogations," Nidal Sofani, 22-year-old student

said. "When people refused to answer questions they were thrown into a cold, wet cell and tortured with electric shocks."

Israeli Colone Yossi who was head of the camp "substantiated" these atrocities "theoretically", claiming that the Ansar inmates were terrorists rather than POWs and therefore the Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war was not applicable to them. What a typically fascist mockery of international law!

The liberated prisoners were not the only ones happy to leave the camp. The young guards did not try to conceal their relief at the thought of returning home alive.

"We were surrounded by a double circle of wrath," one of them confessed. "There was the inmates' hatred inside and the neighbouring villagers' hatred outside. In Israel itself more and more people are voicing opposition to the further presence of our troops in Lebanon."

While Pulling Out They Stay

The Israeli authorities could not fail to come eventually to that realisation. the day after Sanaa Mhaidli had sacrificed her life Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres declared:

"Probably, to put a stop to these attacks on us, it would be best to pull our army out of Lebanon."

On April 21, after long and heated debates, the Cabinet was forced to pass a resolution on withdrawing Israeli troops and deploying them along the border with Lebanon. The withdrawal was to be completed before the beginning of June. However, the decision was made dependent on conditions that bring to naught even its hypothetical effect. Israel has reserved the "right" to act at its own discretion in the so-called "security zone" where, according to its plans, the "South Lebanese Army" is to be concentrated. Opinions within the Israeli Cabinet differed only on the question of how deep inside Lebanese territory the "security zone" should extend. An analysis of Israel's actions shows that it has no intention of renouncing its plans for intervention and occupation.

According to the Israeli newspaper HA'ARETZ, Israel is leaving coals for another fire by maintaining "security zones." Instead of closing the "Lebanese chapter" in the history of its wars, it wants to re-open it. It is hard to imagine, Yedioth Aharonoth wrote, how the Israeli government intends to put an end to the war in Lebanon, as long as it continues to support Lahad's Army.

Naturally, the Lebanese place even less trust in Israel. Here is what Nabih Berri, leader of the Amal Shiite movement, had to say in this respect: "We reject the surrogate pullout which we already witnessed in 1978. Israel hopes to entrench itself in disguise in the border zone, violating in this way UN Security Council Resolution 425 on the complete and unconditional withdrawal

of its troops from Lebanon. The resistance movement in the south and all of the Lebanese people have the legitimate right to fight for the liberation of every inch of their territory."

To maintain its presence in Lebanon, Israel is planning to establish settlements in the "security zone" to be controlled by elements loyal to it and by some local "militia" on the basis of religious affiliation, Israeli secret services agents have already tried to form groups of collaborators in border villages in the district of Hasbai.

The aggressor is pinning great hopes on kindling enmity among the Lebanese religious communities and on provoking clashes between the Lebanese and the Palestinian civilians who live for the most part in camps in southern Lebanon. The Saida drama has demonstrated what the fruits of this policy are.

Hardly a month has passed from the time of the city's liberation when its suburbs and environs became the scene of fierce battles between the Lebanese regular army and detachments of the progressive left-wing forces, on the one hand, and the right-wing Christian extremists, on the other. Characteristically enough, the outbreak of fighting occurred several days after a "mini-coup" in the right-wing Christian camp and the emergence of a group of people with Samir Jaajaa at the head of the militants. According to the local and foreign press, the "mini-coup" was carried out with the knowledge and participation of Israel. The militants from the right-wing Christian "Lebanese forces" coordinated their aggressive actions and shelling of Saida with the occupation army's command. Furthermore, Israeli gunboats supported them from the sea with fire. During the first month of clashes in Saida, from March 18 to April 18 alone more than 70 people were killed and over 360 were wounded. About 30,000 Palestinians, fearing the worst, left the Ain al-Hilva and Mie-Mie camps bordering on the city. Internecine conflicts, whipped up from without, also flared up with renewed force in Beirut.

By sowing inter-communal dissension, the invaders are seeking to paralyze the legitimate Lebanese authorities and distract the Lebanese from tackling the main problem--liberating all of its national territory.

A recent statement by TASS stressed that the Soviet Union resolutely denounced Israel's continued aggression in Lebanon and expressed its solidarity with the Lebanese people who are fighting the Israeli invaders to regain their lawful rights. Tel Aviv should withdraw its troops unconditionally and without delay from the entire territory of Lebanon, as was demanded by the UN Security Council Resolution.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

CAUSES, EFFECTS OF AFRICAN ECONOMIC CRISIS ANALYZED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 5, Sep-Oct 85 pp 14-18

[Article by Leonid Fituni, cand. sc. (econ.)]

[Text] International organisations, political leaders, scholars and journalists are sounding the alarm: Africa has been experiencing a severe economic crisis, and there is no end to it in sight. Its beginning coincided with the regular slump in the West. However, simply stating the fact that there is a link between this crisis and the upheavals in the world capitalist economy is obviously insufficient.

The difficulties Africa has encountered are not only a distant echo of the economic hurricanes in Western Europe and North America but also go far beyond the framework of the crises which are normal for capitalism. These difficulties stem from highly complicated problems which are brought about by the overall socio-economic backwardness of the continent, a result of its long colonial exploitation, low level of productive forces' development, subordinate position within the international capitalist division of labour, etc. Essentially, the way for the current crisis in all its manifestations was also paved by the decades of neocolonial exploitation during which Africa's natural resources were plundered, its traditional export commodities were purchased at extremely low prices, while Western industrial products were sold at very high prices, its independence was restricted through debts and other actions by imperialist centres and their monopolies.

African economists and statesmen focus their attention on a number of particularly burning issues. Among them are the food supply, financing economic development, debts, prices for raw materials, the growth of protectionism in the West which hits the developing countries' exports hard, etc.

The food crisis constitutes one of the continent's most crucial problems. Although many African countries formally give priority to agriculture in their economic strategies, it is either developing too slowly or even regressing. Agriculture's share in Africa's aggregate Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell from 42.3 per cent in 1960 to 23 per cent in 1984. These conditions aggravated by the catastrophic droughts which primarily struck the Sahel zone, resulted in a ten and in some countries even a twenty per cent drop in African food production over the past decade. During the same period annual food imports

increased by an average of 8.4 per cent. In 1960-1980 the level of self-reliance in the production of food among the continent's rapidly growing population dropped from 98 per cent to 86 per cent. According to some forecasts, by the end of 1985 it will have dropped even further to 81 per cent.

The UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) believes that seven African countries--Mauritania, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Sudan, Chad and Ethiopia--will experience "exceptional difficulties" in feeding themselves in 1985. The situation will remain complicated in Angola, Botswana, Bourkina Faso, Burundi, Zambia, the Republic of Cape Verde Islands, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Lesotho, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia and Tanzania. The total volume of grain production in the above-mentioned countries in 1984 equaled 22.7 million tons, or almost 40 per cent less than in 1983. Those countries had to increase their import by 7.3 million tons in the 1983/84 agricultural year, while in all likelihood it will grow by another 11.8 million tons in 1984/85.

According to FAO estimates, the aforementioned countries have immediate need of 6.6 million tons of food. Moreover, it is predicted that the world community will provide Ethiopia alone with 1.5 million tons of grain in 1985 to help it overcome the effects of the severe drought.

Many Western scholars believe that the food crisis on the African continent mainly stems from excessively rapid population growth and natural disasters while at the same time totally ignoring the socio-economic aspects of the problem.

Actually, Africa is far from overpopulated. Even in the "hungriest" zone--Sahel--there is three or four times more arable land per each inhabitant than in Western Europe for example. The famine in Africa is a result of the imbalance which appeared during the colonisation of the continent by European powers when the planting of export crops such as coffee, cacao, cotton, tea, etc., was accompanied by the driving of Africans from fertile land, the reduction of the amount of land under food crops designated for local consumption, the predatory exploitation of arable land, the advance of deserts, frequent droughts, etc.

Under the influence of the world capitalist market's demands, the economic structures of some African countries change completely after they gain independence. Nigeria is a case in point. As oil production expanded, the agrarian sector, which once provided the population with food and produced commodities for exports went into a decline. Today Nigeria is the biggest importer of food in Africa. According to experts, in 1990 it will account for two-thirds of all African grain imports (about 16 million tons).

In recent years African agriculture has become a sphere of activities for the big agro-industrial transnational corporations which not only produce and sell different commodities, but also keep under their control related branches of the economy, including the food, farm equipment and fertilizer industries. Through their affiliates they also penetrate local markets for produce. Moreover, totally ignoring the interests of young states, they impose a structure of agrarian production upon the latter beneficial to the TNCs, set up quotas

on the purchase of various products, and fix prices. All this aggravates the food crisis still further. The crisis is also exacerbated by the migration of large numbers of peasants to urban areas, and the extreme weakness of African agriculture's material and technical base which fails to boost labour productivity in agriculture.

Today in Africa there are, on average, 1.7 hectares of arable land per capita, of which only 0.55 hectares are used. The average global yield for cereals is approximately 20 centners per hectare and the yield for root crops is 110 centners per hectare, while the respective figures for Africa are 11 and 70 centners. In Africa 3 kilograms of fertilizer are used per hectare of arable land, whereas the corresponding figures for Latin America and Asia are 8 and 26 kilograms.

According to UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) forecasts, given the current unfavourable conditions the crisis situation in African agriculture will continue for the next 20 years. Complete self-reliance in food production will not be achieved. The import of grain and other products will require large expenditures each year. The situation can only be changed through far-reaching socio-economic reforms.

However, the ECA does not regard the situation as hopeless. According to the Commission, a fundamental restructuring of agriculture, involving improvements in agricultural technology, the intensification of production, the expansion of irrigation and drainage work, land improvement, reductions in crop losses could have a positive effect provided social problems are resolved--the rate of employment in rural areas is increased, the gap between the income levels of urban and rural residents narrowed, and inflow of peasants to urban areas reduced.

Agriculture serves as the economic base in the absolute majority of African countries. The crisis in that sphere inevitably entails slowing down the entire national economy's rate of growth, particularly when external factors exert a negative influence. In the 1980s, the increment of the African states' aggregate GDP dropped to zero. In 1983, the GDP decreased by 1.9 per cent, and in 1984 it rose by 1.4 per cent, although it failed to reach the 1980 level.

The shortage of financial resources brought about an almost universal curtailment of development programmes. This means a delay in accomplishing the principal task facing young states, i.e., overcoming centuries-old backwardness and eliminating the tremendous gap in the level of development between the African countries and the industrialised states.

The reduction in the amount of foreign currency Africa took it occurred, among other reasons, due to the growth in protectionism in the West, which reduced the opportunities for exporting not only ready-made goods, but also many types of raw materials.

The old problem of the price discrepancy has been further aggravated. In 1983, prices for raw materials dropped to their lowest levels since the Great

Depression of the 1930s. Peanuts, cacao, cotton, sisal and tea together with copper, phosphates, iron ore, oil and even diamonds all became cheaper. From 1981 to 1984 the purchasing power of the African countries' exports fell by more than 25 per cent. African countries are compelled to spend more and more of their limited resources on importing expensive industrial goods while at the same time they receive less money for their exports.

The economic crisis makes the developing countries of Africa take out loans with increasing frequency. At the end of the past decade African countries could obtain loans on relatively favourable terms. That is why, to support their economic growth, the African countries were relatively unconcerned about their growing foreign debt. However, by using loans to cover their balance of payments deficit they became increasingly bogged down in a morass of debts. By the beginning of 1984 the aggregate debt of the African countries had reached \$150 billion. This sum exceeds the revenues they earned from the export of goods and revenues they earned from the export of goods and services in 1983 by 80 per cent. The financing of current government expenditures and development programmes demand that more and more new loans be taken out. Meanwhile, the terms have become harsher. The reduction in credit on easy terms is causing apprehension. In 1971 the share of private loans totaled 32.5 per cent, while in 1984 this figure stood at about 42 per cent. In 1982 the average repayment schedule was 15 years as opposed to 22 years in 1971. Repayment schedules for the majority of loans were reduced from 6 years in the 1970s to 4 years in the 1980s. Interest rates grew from 4.4 per cent in 1972 to 10.1 per cent in 1981.

Due to high cost of credits from international capital markets, interest payments have grown sharply in a number of African countries. In 1973, Africa spent \$470 million on interest payments and on covering the bulk of its debts. By 1982, the cumulative losses of what were already limited resources amounted to more than \$3.2 billion. The cost of "servicing debts" is constantly mounting. In 1983 it swallowed 22.4 per cent of the African countries' export revenues, as compared with 10.7 per cent in 1980. Algeria, the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Zaire, Zambia, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia have the largest foreign debts in per capita terms.

For example, by the beginning of 1984 the Ivory Coast's foreign debt had reached \$6.5 billion, i.e., 90 per cent of the country's GDP. 35 per cent of its export earnings are spent each year on the debt servicing. Unable to repay its loans Zaire has had to ask to have its debt rescheduled six times during the past eight years.

The problem of Africa's indebtedness is aggravated by the growth of banking rates in the US. Thus, for Nigeria a mere one point increase in these rates means the boosting of its debt by \$100 million. When the dollar became "more expensive", this hit African countries hard. It dashed their hopes of curbing inflation and brought about a drop in prices for raw material exports. Furthermore, these countries are now forced to repay their loans in "expensive" dollars, although they obtained them when dollars were "cheap".

All this shows that the current crisis was caused by the interplay of a whole complex of external and internal factors, the dominating problem being the continuing neocolonial plundering of Africa. That is the primary reason for the exacerbation of all crises.

However, further aggravation of the crisis is already beginning to affect the economic interests of monopoly capital. It poses the threat of a political explosion on the continent, an event which is undesirable to world imperialism. This impels the West to somewhat alleviate the effects of the crisis in the African economy. Imperialist powers attempt to take part in the shaping of "anti-crisis" policies for the African countries. Western economic aid--both on a bilateral basis and via international financial institutions such as the IMF, the IBRD, various "clubs" and consortiums of creditors--could serve as an efficient instrument of these policies. However, in the course of negotiations on granting loans to African countries ultimatums that impinge upon their sovereign rights are frequently made.

Washington's "aid" is increasingly becoming an instrument of blackmail. According to a report by the U.S. State Department (May 1984), American crumbs are given out on the condition that "political reforms are carried out". In its official statements the White House has stressed more than once that only those countries which follow the lead of U.S. foreign policy, reduce their public sectors and vigorously develop private enterprise can rely on "U.S. aid".

In recent years the U.S. has intensified its economic expansion in Africa. Its direct investments in that continent's developing countries grew from \$3 billion in 1972 to \$5 billion in 1982. Washington's economic penetration is accompanied by political and military expansion.

The arms race into which imperialism is drawing the African countries has an adverse effect on their economies and aggravates the crisis. Only 15 years ago Africa was the last in the world in terms of its defense spending, while today it spends as much as South and Central America and the Pacific combined. The army diverts not only huge monetary resources, but also a considerable percentage of technical personnel. The number of people who, without producing any material values, are fully provided for by the budget, is growing. Military expenditures continue to consume an enormous part of budget in some African countries.

The deterioration of the economic situation in Africa clearly demonstrates that the goals of overcoming its age-old backwardness and attaining economic independence can only be reached by actively counteracting imperialism's policies vis-a-vis the continent and altering the status of the African countries within the international capitalist division of labour.

In the 1980s Africa became the first developing continent to have its own regional development strategy. Its basic provisions were formulated in Monrovia Declaration of the Heads of State and Government (1979) and the Lagos Plan of Action (1980). The main emphasis of the development strategy is placed on the use of internal resources and the principle of collective

self-reliance. Foreign aid and foreign private capital are assigned a secondary role. Much attention is given to accelerating the continent's economic integration. At this time subregional integration associations have been set up in Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. The goal of establishing an African "Common Market" by the year 2000 has been set. Implementation of the Lagos Plan could promote the strengthening of Africa's position in the struggle against neo-colonialism and help put an end to the protracted economic crisis there.

The anti-imperialist tendency of the African development strategy is causing anxiety among those forces which would like to turn Africa into a dependent periphery of world capitalism forever. A number of "counter-strategies" have been elaborated in the West, whose main aim is to smear the policies pursued by the ECA and the OAU and prove that the crisis cannot be overcome by implementing these policies.

Such research (the most well known is a report by the IBRD entitled "Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa", 1981, and a 1984 progress report on the implementation of IBRD recommendations) is designed to free imperialism from responsibility for the current crisis. The reports claim that it is the African states themselves that are to blame for their economic difficulties. In essence, the authors advocate a renunciation of the main points of the Lagos Plan.

The African states categorically rejected the main thrust of the IBRD reports, regarding them as an attempt to make the African economy still more dependent on the imperialist powers. At the same time the African countries objectively cannot totally refuse to cooperate with the IMF. A number of countries were compelled to sign agreements with the Fund which, in exchange for aid, demanded that they devalue local currencies, cut down allocations for social programmes and even that they transfer their budget-making function to the IMF. Zaire and Somalia are cases in point. Those states which did not blindly follow the IMF recipes succeeded in having the terms eased in the course of negotiations. Nevertheless, they, too, have felt the weight of crushing agreements.

The majority of African countries have no intention of bowing submissively to the imperialist diktat. They are persistently working to translate the regional development strategy into reality. The role of the state in their economies is growing, and the investments in agriculture are rising. The process of inter-African economic integration is well underway.

In working to boost their national economies, the African states rely on the friendly assistance and support of the socialist countries, of the Soviet Union in particular. Mutually beneficial cooperation with the world of socialism in all its many forms has become an important factor in economic progress in Africa.

The Soviet Union supports the just struggle waged by the African countries to have international economic relations restructured. It strives to provide the maximum possible assistance to the young states as they work to achieve fundamental economic and social goals, and helps them advance along the road towards a new life.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

VIETNAM COMMUNIST PARTY MARKS FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

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[Article by Anatoly Volodin]

[Text] The history of Vietnam is the history of many centuries of popular struggle against foreign invaders for national independence, freedom, and the territorial integrity of the Motherland. There are quite a few glorious chapters in this chronicle of valour but the events which took place in the autumn of 1945 occupy a special place in it.

Forty years ago the Vietnamese people's August Revolution ended triumphantly, and the country won its independence. The August 1945 Revolution was organically linked with the victory of the Soviet people over Hitler's fascism and Japanese militarism, as well as with the changes in Asia which were brought about by that victory. It is highly indicative that the day of Japan's surrender--September 2, 1945--was also the day the first state of workers and peasants in Southeast Asia was proclaimed--the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The August Revolution was carried out under the guidance of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the militant vanguard of the working class and of the Republic's working people.

The establishment of the party of Communists was preceded by many years of preparatory work. This was not an easy process, the more so since at the beginning of the 20th century there was no socialist traditions in Vietnamese society which was isolated by the colonial authorities from the principal centres of the international revolutionary movement.

The formation of the Communist Party was a historic turning point in the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people, a turning point, which marked the establishment of the leading role of the working class in the revolution and the end of the ideological and organisational crisis in Vietnam's national liberation movement.

The Communist Party of Vietnam did not become the political and ideological leader of the country all of a sudden. It won this role by working indefatigably to unite its ranks, strengthen and develop its ties with the masses, translate the people's aspirations into the language of revolutionary action,

inspire the masses for struggle and lead them. In the course of long battles the Party perfected the art of organically combining fundamental revolutionary strategy with flexible tactics and the most diverse forms and methods of struggle.

From the very first days of its existence, the Party made it clear that during the initial stage of the revolution the goal must be to deprive the imperialists and feudal lords of their power, to win national independence, and to give the land to those who work it. Then the goal was to march towards socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage of development. A close alliance between the working classes and peasantry was regarded as the basis driving force behind the revolution.

Only 15 years elapsed between the formation of the Party and the triumphant conclusion of the revolution in August 1945. But during that period the Party succeeded in carrying out three rehearsals of the revolution. The first was the powerful revolutionary surge of 1930-1931 when the prototype of the future organs of people's power--the Nghetinh Soviets--was formed. The struggle against fascism and war in 1936-1939 was the second rehearsal. During that period the Communists mastered the art of political work with the masses, and gained the ability to combine legal and illegal methods of action. Between 1939 and 1945 the Party laid the political, organisational and ideological groundwork for a general armed uprising.

The August 1945 Revolution reaffirmed the correctness of the strategy chosen by the Communist Party of Vietnam [CPV]. With the proclamation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam the country acquired the statehood colonialists had taken from it and won political independence.

However, the Vietnamese people, guided by the Communist Party, had to defend its freedom for several dozen years against the encroachments of imperialists who sought, by force of arms, to restore colonialism in Vietnam. In 1954, the patriots succeeded in completely driving the invaders out of the northern part of the country and began to lay the foundations of socialism. As for the South, due to U.S. imperialist aggression 20 years were needed to liberate it.

The specific situation which took shape in Vietnam after 1954 demanded that the CPV elaborate and consistently implement a strategy and tactics that would utilise the full range of forms and methods of military, political and diplomatic struggle to ensure a single leadership of the revolutionary process in the country, which was temporarily divided into two parts. During those years the party strikingly revealed its wisdom and creative abilities, such as the ability to mobilise workers and peasants from the North and South to fight for the liberation of the Motherland, to set up on this basis a broad national front and win the sympathy, support, and assistance of revolutionary and peace-loving forces around the globe, of the peoples and governments of most of the states to the side of the liberation struggle waged by the people.

The historical victory won in the spring of 1975 put an end to more than a century of colonial domination in Vietnam. It frustrated the strategic calculations made by the forces of imperialism and hegemonism. As a result of this victory, necessary prerequisites were created for the reunification of Vietnam and the formation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Vietnamese people entered a new stage of development; now they set about building socialism throughout the country.

The fundamentally new situation that took shape in Vietnam after 1975 and the new tasks facing the people demanded that the Party elaborate and specify the course of building socialism in the united Vietnam. This was done by the Fourth [December 1976] and the Fifth [March 1982] CPV Congresses. Party documents stressed that during the transition to socialism the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a state in which the working people are the masters should secure a genuine revolution in the rise of the productive forces, in the sphere of the relations of production and in the civic, cultural and spiritual life of society.

Ten years have passed since the complete liberation of Vietnam from imperialist domination. Immense achievements have been made in healing the wounds of war and laying the foundations of a new society. Despite the unfavourable foreign affairs situation and the need to divert material and human resources to protect the country from armed attacks from without, the Vietnamese people have managed to restore the agricultural, industrial and transportation facilities that were destroyed. Millions of the dispossessed obtained housing and jobs.

The achievements made in agriculture--the key branch of the Vietnamese economy--are particularly impressive. In 1984, despite unfavourable weather conditions, more than 17.5 million tons of rice and other crops were harvested. As a result, the needs of the population in food are mainly satisfied domestically. This was all the more significant in view of the fact that in 1975, during the final months before the fall of the Saigon regime in South Vietnam, several hundred thousand people were threatened with death from starvation.

Positive changes have also occurred in industrial output in the course of the current five-year-plan period (1981-1985) was over 10 per cent. Production of electricity, machines, cement, chemical fertilizer, fabrics and paper has risen considerably.

Capital construction is another area where improvement has been made. Vietnam succeeded in concentrating its resources on decisive projects in key industries. Today, large hydroelectric and thermoelectric power stations such as Hoabinh, Phalai, Trian are under construction. The first oil has been extracted on the continental shelf in the South of the country. New moorings have been built in the sea ports of Haiphong, Hongai and Campha. The trans-Vietnamese railroad linking Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City has been put back in operation.

Much has been done to strengthen the public and cooperative sectors of the economy. By the end of 1984, more than 50 per cent of peasants who own

about half of the arable land in South Vietnam belonged to production teams, groups of mutual labour assistance or agricultural cooperatives.

The Communist Party of Vietnam bases its actions on the Leninist tenet that the achievements scored in building a new society will be more impressive if the masses take a more active part in government and community affairs. This right was guaranteed the working people by the SRV Constitution adopted in December 1980. Here is an example of how working people make use of this right. Of the 496 deputies in the SRV National Assembly, 100 are workers, 92 are peasants, 110 are members of the technical, scientific and people's intelligentsia, and 9 are artisans.

Mass public organisations--the Federation of Trade Unions, the Young Communist League, the Federation of Women--have been doing a great deal to mobilise the working people to fulfil the Republic's socio-economic development plans and to explain Party policies.

By accomplishing the tasks set by the 4th and 5th Congresses, the Communist Party of Vietnam strengthens its leading role in all sectors of the socialist construction, ensures the ideological and organisational consolidation of its ranks and the indissoluble unity of party and people. While becoming increasingly aware of the objective laws governing development and strictly taking into account the specific conditions under which the Party has been creating a new society, the CPV is acquiring invaluable practical experience and enriching its arsenal of ways of influencing all aspects of people's life, politically, ideologically and organisationally.

The purposeful efforts made by Party bodies, cadres and all Communists to mobilise the working class, cooperative farm peasants and people's intelligentsia so as to fulfill the tasks of socio-economic development facing the SRV in the 1980s, which were advanced by the 5th Party Congress, can be discerned in all of the country's labour achievements which are no less significant than the heroic deeds the people performed during the war.

Today the Party has over 1.8 million members who are active in more than 35,000 primary organisations, which have been set up at practically every industrial enterprise, repair shop, educational establishment and socio-cultural institution in the north of the country. The influence of Party organisations on production and social life in southern Vietnam is becoming stronger with every year that passes.

The CPV takes care to improve the qualitative composition of its ranks. Attention has primarily been given to admitting workers, peasants, members of the Vietnamese People's Army, and representatives of the scientific, technical and creative intelligentsia to the Party. Over 84 per cent of the young Communists who join the CPV do so through the Ho Chi Minh Young Communist League. About half of the new party members have a secondary or specialised secondary education, and six per cent are graduates of institutions of higher learning.

As for ideology, the CPV sees its main task in arming Communists with the teaching of Marxism-Leninism, giving them the will and resolve to overcome

all difficulties, and imparting Party members with the knowledge they will need in order to build socialism and defend their Motherland. Each Communist should not only have a profound understanding of Party policy, but he should also fight with conviction for its realisation. This was stressed at the 4th Plenary Meeting of the CPV Central Committee [1983] which examined the urgent tasks the Party faces in its organisational and ideological work.

The Party has invigorated its theoretical activities and enhanced the quality of social science research. The scholars concentrate on the laws governing the transition to socialism, on CPV economic strategy, and Party and economic construction at the current stage of development.

The Party acts in the knowledge that management of the national economy should occupy a central place in its work. This involves quite a few difficult problems both in terms of theory and practice. The objective circumstance that, although the Party has been in power for almost 40 years now, it could not concentrate on the problems of economic management due to the war also had a telling effect.

In recent years the CPV has done everything in its power to arm its cadres and all Party members, with the knowledge necessary to manage the economy. These questions are regularly taken up at plenary meetings of the CPV Central Committee. They were also on the agenda of the 6th Plenary Meeting in July 1984. Its decisions emphasised the need to further strengthen the public sector of the economy and invigorate socialist reforms. At the same time the CPV demanded an elimination of the bureaucratic obstacles which were blocking the initiative of enterprises, Party and economic bodies.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is the supreme form of political organisation for the Vietnamese working class. The CPV has grown and has been tempered on Vietnamese soil. It never separated itself from the international communist movement, but regarded itself as an inalienable part of latter. By its selfless struggle for the interests of the working people, for strengthening the unity of the international communist and workers' movement, for further solidarity of the countries which make up the socialist community on the unshakable foundations of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism the Communist Party of Vietnam has won great prestige among Communists around the world, among all those who oppose imperialism, and fight for peace, democracy and socialism.

The CPV has been developing cooperation with the CPSU and the Soviet Union. The 5th CPV Congress declared: "The cohesion and allround cooperation with the Soviet Union have been and continue to be the cornerstone of the foreign policy pursued by our Party and state."

The fraternal friendship between the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and Vietnam was tested and tempered in the joint struggle for common ideals. The indissoluble ties between the CPSU and the CPV, the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Soviet and the Vietnamese peoples, as well as their mutual aspiration to develop and strengthen Soviet-Vietnamese friendship and allround cooperation were reiterated during a meeting between

Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and Truong Tinh, Member of the CPV CC Political Bureau, Chairman of the SRV State Council, which was held in Moscow on March 14, 1985.

Interparty ties between the CPSU and the CPV are becoming increasingly diverse, and their effectiveness is growing. They embrace the problems of political interaction, economic cooperation, and the ideological convergence of the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union and Socialist Vietnam. The number of similar or common problems which Soviet and Vietnamese Communists must tackle is constantly expanding. Time has fully corroborated that the exchange of information on building socialism and communism, organised by the CPSU and the CPV, is a sine qua non of achieving faster the goals that have been set.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

NIGERIA'S SUCCESSES, PROBLEMS AFTER 25 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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[Article by Vladimir Novikov]

[Text] On October 1, 1985, Nigeria marked the 25th anniversary of her delivery from the yoke of British colonialism. This major African nation with a population numbering 90 million has done a great deal to overcome social and economic backwardness and pave the way for further progress. In terms of GNP, oil production, volume of foreign trade and investments in the economy Nigeria rates first among the independent countries of the continent. This has earned her the nickname "the giant of Africa". The giant might have even greater achievements to his name were it not for the persistent political crises which plague it. Since independence was declared the country has seen several military coups and has been ruled by two civilian and five military governments.

From October 1960 to January 1966 [the time of the First Republic, in Nigerian terminology] the country was ruled by the government of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. This was followed by a period of military regimes led by Aguiyi Ironsi [January-July 1966], Yakubu Gowon [July 1966-July 1975], Murtala Muhammed and Olusegun Obasanjo [July 1975-October 1979]. On October 1, 1979, civilian government was restored. Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria [NPN] was elected president. But the Second Republic proved even more shortlived than the first. Yet another coup on December 31, 1983 installed the military government of Muhammady Buhari, dethroned in its turn not so long ago, on August 27 this year, during the military coup led by Major-General Ibrahim Babangida.

Political instability is common in many young African states. Still the stormy events in Nigeria, which plays an important role within the continent, continue to attract particular attention. Speculating as to the causes of these developments Western observers often refer to such factors as the alleged "traditional yearning for power" [sometimes an even more forceful phrase is used--"the thirst for power"] on the part of Nigeria's military and the inability to adopt and put into place "a democratic form of government". It is not difficult to see the real motives behind such demagogical assertions. This author has witnessed the real joy the majority of Nigerians felt at the news of overthrow of the Shagari government. And how could they

deplore the demise of a "democracy" whose passing was publicly bewailed by President Reagan and leaders of other imperialist powers?

No less disappointment was displayed in the West over the fall of the First Republic whose political system was a copy of British parliamentarism which did not take local conditions into consideration but whose long-term aim was based on the principle "divide and continue to rule". The tame 1959 elections, supervised by the colonisers, did not give an absolute majority to any of the Nigerian parties. The latter were in fact made up of ethno-regional groupings which had influence almost exclusively in their "own" regions.¹ The government was formed by what had until then been competing parties of the Northern People's Congress [the Hausas] and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens [the Ibos]. They were the forerunners of the NPN and NNP while their leaders, A. T. Balewa and Nnamdi Azikiwe, became prime minister and president respectively. The main opposition was put up by the Action Group, a Yoruba party led by Obafemi Awolowo.

Officials in the First Republic put their ambitions and the selfish interests of the well-to-do leaders of various ethnic groups ahead of national interests. Instead of uniting in order to solve the complex problems the country had inherited from the colonial period, they staged a struggle among themselves for dominance in the country. In the meantime international monopolies continued to reign supreme in Nigeria's economy, and prices for consumer goods soared naturally causing wide-scale discontent. Nigeria was plagued by chronic crises which the government was not only unable to check but actually aggravated. In the course of the 1964 and, in particular, the 1965 elections inter-party conflicts turned into outright violence that took hundreds of lives. The western region became the scene of a real war while in the east the election results were not accepted.

When events took this turn the army's middle and lower ranks stepped in. Many high-ranking federal and regional political bigwigs were executed. Although the larger part of the army remained loyal to the government and the multinous soldiers returned to their barracks the cabinet was no longer able to control the situation and decided to hand power over to the army.

The step was well timed. The separatist and chauvinist leaders of the Eastern Region proclaimed the establishment of the "independent Republic of Biafra", which led to the outbreak of a civil war in July 1967. Most of the Western powers took an ambiguous position at that time. Some directly encouraged the rebels who were attempting to take away that area of the country richest in oil. The Soviet Union expressed its solidarity with the central government and provided it material aid which is still remembered with gratitude in Nigeria. 30 months later the dramatic confrontation ended in the defeat of the dissenters. The army proved to be the only force capable of securing the country's territorial integrity.

¹ Even before winning independence Nigeria was divided into three regions--Northern, Western and Eastern--where most of the population was made up of Hausas, Yorubas and Ibos respectively.

Why did the first two military governments fall? Ironsi was deposed [and killed] by the armed forces after he dismantled the federal structure of poly-ethnic Nigeria and made it a unitary state. Gowon renounced his own programme for handing power over to civilians and was deposed by a group of military men headed by M. Muhammed who almost immediately announced a stage-by-stage transfer of power to civilian government. An attempted coup on February 13, 1976, received no support and was quelled within a few hours. Its organizers opposed the country's evolution towards civilian rule. Muhammed was killed but his successor, O. Obasanjo, voluntarily handed over the reins of government to an elected civilian administration on October 1, 1979.

Thus the allegations concerning the Nigerian military's "pathological love of power" and the average Nigerian's "non-acceptance" of democracy are, to put it mildly, far-fetched.

The five official parties which took part in general elections held in July-August 1979, as well as their predecessors at the time of the First Republic, were formed on the ethno-regional principle. If there were changes then they were in name only. The major national groups--the Hausas, Yorubas and Ibos--were represented by the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and the Nigerian People's Party (NPP) respectively. Most of the leaders were also holdovers from the First Republic. The UPN was headed by O. Awolowo who is called "father", the NPP was led by N. Azikiwe. The interests of the traditional aristocracy and the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie of the Moslem North were represented by the NPN leader Shagari, the political heir to those high-ranking officials who were executed by firing squads in January 1966. Perhaps the only difference between the two republics consisted in the fact that the second one was modeled on the American, rather than the British, system of government.

In the most important elections--the presidential elections--Shagari won by a slim margin not surprisingly, given that the northern Hausa numerically predominate in the country. But his party received less than a half of the seats in parliament and formed a coalition government with the Ibo NPP as it had 20 years before. This ought to have satisfied both parties; the NPN guaranteed itself a quiet life in the National Assembly while the NPP got a number of ministerial and other key posts. However, the NPN, seeking an undivided rule, was reluctant to consult its junior partner, and the NPP, in turn tried to get as much as possible for its support of the government. The leaders of the two sides asked themselves with increasing frequency who profited most from their alliance, completely forgetting that the unity of Nigeria should be their first priority. This petty shopkeeper mentality soon led to the inevitable split of the coalition. The NPP took its place alongside the UPN, the Yoruba party, as an active opponent of the government.

On the eve of the next [1983] elections the opposition leaders tried to set up an "Alliance of Progressive Parties" [progressive, as many people in Nigeria were well aware, in name only] in order to defeat Shagari. The plan fell through, however, due to long-standing disagreements and distrust

between Awolowo and Zikiwe, who each sought to become president. The opposition remained in disarray.

Still the ruling party, the NPN, which had solid support in only seven or eight states out of the nineteen in the federation, could have no hope of winning a majority of the seats in the Assembly. NPN leaders before resorted to blackmailing and bribing the opposition and falsifying the election results. The results of the 1983 pseudo-elections, which the majority of Nigerian newspapers and magazines called "the country's greatest shame", depended not on the will of the electorate but on the "leverage" of the parties. In this respect none of them could rival the NPN which, according to official information [the true figure is not available], spent, over a thousand million dollars on the campaign--twice as much as the other parties put together--and this enabled it to control the Federal Election Commission, the Supreme Court and the security service. The election results were tampered with in such a way that the opposition, even if it had been united, would have smaller representation in elected bodies than the Shagari Party.

Government propaganda trumpeted the triumph of the regime, the entire nation's "support" for its policies, the spread of NPN influence to the majority of states, and hammered in the slogan "One Nation--One Party". Posing as the champion of national unity and equality for all ethnic groups, the Shagari government, more than any other, expressed the interests of the exploiting upper crust of the north. Acting behind the scenes the NPN set peoples against one another and fanned religious conflicts giving rise to clashes that virtually never stopped. In the east and west the NPN "supported" ethnic minorities to create problems for its main political opponents--the Yoruba and the Ibo parties, while in the North, an area viewed as its own estate, it stopped at nothing to suppress opposition. For example, unable to win over A. M. Rimi, the governor of Kano, a major northern state, the NPN set a crowd of religious fanatics on him in the summer 1981. The governor's palace and some administrative buildings were destroyed, and several people were killed, while Rimi had a very narrow escape.

All of that invited the ground swell of protest which grew especially strong between July and September 1983. The opposition openly challenged the results of the elections calling them a farce. The situation in some areas of the west, east and north-east resembled that of 1965-1966.

Nevertheless the ruling party only made the situation worse. Thinking that the NPN's four-year term of office was guaranteed, all those who had paid the exorbitant price for its victory were in a hurry to be reimbursed. When making appointments in the new administration they considered the applicant's contributions to the party fund, while ignoring his personal qualities and abilities. The local press made no bones about the fact that the second Shagari government was the most incompetent in the country's history. Cabinet members' main concern was filling their pockets.

"Management" like this was murderous for the Nigerian economy given the prolonged crisis caused by a decline in the demand and prices for oil [its export provided the state treasury with 95 per cent of its hard currency and 80 per cent of all revenues]. The downfall of the Shagari government was right around the corner.

As all the political parties had, without exception, demonstrated their inability to lead the country out of this impasse, the supreme command of the army, having forestalled, as was later officially revealed, an action by subalterns, took over during what was a virtually bloodless coup. Its organizers should not be identified with the corrupt bureaucratic army upper crust which "struck roots" in the regime, was implicated in numerous financial machinations and compromised itself by supporting NPN arbitrariness. Undoubtedly, the Buhari government, which was formed by the army top brass, mainly represented the interests of the well-off strata of society, and the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie first and foremost, but that part of it which is characterised by nationalistic sentiment, opposed the sway of neo-compradors, which multiplied under the "second republic", and favours economic growth. That is why the majority of Nigerians have welcomed the overthrow of the Shagari regime awaiting radical changes from the military.

However, already when the Supreme Military Council (SMC) was being set up its members displayed a great deal of differences on questions related to the solution of problems facing the country. Some SMC members, among them the army staff commander Ibrahim Babangida and the commander of the 2d mechanised infantry division Sanny Abacha, urged to take emergency measures. They proposed that a large-scale long-term socio-economic programme be elaborated. At the same time Buhari and his supporters in the SMC wanted to confine themselves to purely cosmetic measures advancing all kinds of "populist" activities instead of a well thoughtout programme aimed at developing the economy and solving social problems on a countrywide scale. Meanwhile, the country's economy was on the verge of a profound crisis and called for immediate remedy to be applied. Statements made by the military on the first days of the coup appealed "to save Nigeria" and had the same purpose in mind.

In one of his first public statements Muhammad Buhari stressed that Nigeria would never return to the kind of "democracy" that existed before the coup. This was promptly interpreted in the West as a sign of the military's desire to perpetuate its rule. However in February 1985 the Nigerian head of state strongly denied these allegations saying that a return to civilian rule was quite feasible although the beginning of this process could only be expected after "three difficult years of correcting past mistakes". An "appropriate political system" must be created, he said, before a referendum is held.

The government's main concern was the revitalization of the economy.

It concentrated on a number of problems that needed to be tackled in the first place even if to the detriment of other no less important issues. Nigeria continued to suffer from an acute shortage of financial resources. A request was made to the International Monetary Fund for a big loan. The IMF responded with crushing terms: the naira [one naira is worth 1.3 U.S. dollars] would have to be devaluated, welfare subsidies would have to cease, wages would have to be frozen, and foreign trade would have to be "liberalised". As the participants in a seminar on this issue held at Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria pointed out, the first condition would mean that imports on which the country's economy depends greatly would become more costly, the second one would signify a further decline in living standards

for working people, and the third one would bring in an influx of Western commodities with which local goods would be unable to compete.

The Buhari government turned down these unacceptable conditions and set about mobilising internal resources: it introduced stringent economy measures, cut down on administrative expenses by approximately one-third, and sharply reduced imports. Its first priority was to repay the national debt which by the time Shagari's government was toppled amounted to 30,000 million nairas, 8,500 million of which was foreign debts. During this period Buhari rule repayments on the foreign debt [together with interest payments] amounted to more than 3,000 million nairas. Payments were made both on long-term and medium-term loans while imports were paid for regularly. This gave Buhari grounds to declare on the first anniversary of the coup: "Nigeria is repaying her debts and no longer goes begging". The government has set aside some four thousand million nairas for this purpose.

In 1984 Nigerian imports slid from 9,700 million to 8,600 million nairas while exports went up from 7,100 million to 8,900 million nairas. Between

1983 and 1984 the budget deficit was reduced from 3,400 million to 126 million nairas.

Mindful of the tense financial situation the government decided not to fall back on foreign loans in the 1984-1985 fiscal year in order to finance new projects. Only major projects received financing, such as the construction of an iron-and-steel plant in Ajaokuta, one of the largest in Tropical Africa, which is being undertaken with Soviet assistance. In October 1984, the second rolling mill "150" designed to produce wire of various gages was commissioned there. Regardless of governments that come and go Nigeria attaches great importance to this plant. The Nigerians see the iron-and-steel industry as the key sector of the economy indispensable for economic development. Upon completion the plant will have an annual capacity of five million tons of steel. It will provide jobs for more than five thousand Nigerians and will enable the country to save a good deal of foreign currency as it will no longer be necessary to import rolled stock and metal constructions.

Nigeria also needed to restore its agriculture in order to strengthen and diversify the national economy. In 1984 the volume of agricultural production increased by 2 per cent [in 1983 it fell by a whole eight per cent]. Plans were being worked out to build large agricultural complexes, to return Nigerians from the overcrowded cities to rural areas, and to provide agriculture with skilled labour and investments. This year over one thousand million nairas--18 per cent of the budget--have been allocated for the development of agriculture.

However, Nigeria's main source of wealth is still its oil. In 1984 oil production provided the state with 7,900 million nairas out of a total of 11,300 million in state revenues. The military managed to stop the smuggling of liquid fuel which brought various "businessmen" a profit of up to a million dollars a day.

To limit the outflow of foreign currency special decrees were passed whose target were the transnational corporations which, juggle their accounts to reduce the amount of profits subject to taxation and transfer them abroad, along with the payments for the use of patents, licenses and trade marks. However, these opportunities were limited. In addition, the Nigerians started checking invoices and products before they are delivered to Nigeria from abroad.

The positive results of these efforts were obvious, nevertheless the economic situation in the country was still far from easy. The damage done to the country by the Shagari regime was so immense that it could not be redressed within eighteen months. Moreover, given the Buhari government's unwillingness to carry out more resolute actions the recovery was altogether impossible. The slump that began in 1981 was not overcome, productivity remained on a very low level, there was chronic shortage of staples, inflation mounted and unemployment affected more than 7 percent of able-bodied population in cities and 2.4 percent in the countryside. The heaviest blow was delivered on those employed in building, industry and trade, branches of the economy particularly dependent on foreign capital, imports of Western raw materials and equipment. The situation was worsened still further by the growing contradictions inside the SMC.

Under these circumstances another military coup took place. The initiators of this coup met with practically no resistance and received the support of the country's armed forces. Major-General Ibrahim Babangida who led the coup became president and commander of the armed forces. Babangida was born in August 1941 in the city of Minna into a Moslem family from the small tribe called gwari. His biography resembles in many ways the biographies of Nigerian career officers. Babangida received good military training: he studied in a Nigerian military college in Caduna, then in the Indian military academy and also in Great Britain. The new head of state took part in the war against separatist Biafra. Babangida is known as an officer enjoying respect and authority among the country's armed forces, especially among ordinary soldiers and non-commissioned officers. His popularity grew dramatically after the events of February 13, 1976. As a commander of a tank brigade he played a key role in suppressing the attempted coup aimed at overthrowing the Muhammed military government. Babagida was very critical of the power transfer to civilian administration in 1979. As a result president Shagari dismissed him from the post of tank brigade commander, a military unit which was highly effective in Nigerian conditions, and promoted him to a higher but less important position in the army staff. Babangida was active in dethroning the Shagari regime. Under Buhari he held the post of the army staff commander.

In his first message to the nation the new head of the state said that Nigeria will pursue the same independent political course underlined by the principles of the Organisation of African Unity and West African Economic Community and participate actively in the nonaligned movement developing mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries irrespective of their social systems.

Among the main reasons behind the overthrow of the Buhari government Babangida listed the mismanagement of the economy, inability to comply with earlier commitments aimed at saving the country, and corruption.

The first move the military made upon coming to power was to dissolve the former government bodies. Instead, the Ruling Council of Nigerian armed forces was set up comprised of 28 representatives of the army and police. President and commander of the armed forces Major-General Babangida became the head of the Council. As the task of top priority the new leadership committed to map out the long-term programme for the solution of socio-economic problems. According to a statement made by Babangida, the military are fully aware of the difficulties facing the country and ready to justify the hopes of the Nigerian people.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

CONTRADICTIONS IN INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT EXAMINED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 5, Sep-Oct 85 pp 67-69

[Article by Alexander Popov]

[Text] Since April 1984 the Republic of Indonesia has been implementing its Fourth Five-Year Plan of Development--Repelita-4. What changes have taken place in the multinational country spread out over 13,000 islands during the rule of the regime which took over in 1966?

In the course of that period some positive changes have occurred in the socio-economic development of Indonesia. The rates of economic growth increased from 3.5 percent in the 1960s to 7.8 percent in the 1970s. In 1980 they were 9.6 per cent and in 1981 they were 7.6 per cent. Only in 1982 and 1983, at a time when the general economic situation in the world was highly unfavourable, they stood as low as 2.25 per cent and 2.0 per cent respectively. In the 1970s the GDP went up from 5,182 billion rupiahs to 10,953 billion rupiahs (in 1973 prices). The GDP was also marked by certain structural shifts: for example, between 1970 and 1982 agriculture's contribution went down from 45.3 to 29.8 per cent, while the share of the manufacturing industry increased substantially, going from 8.4 per cent to 15.4 per cent. These changes reflect the policy of establishing a modern industrial structure in Indonesia. The agricultural production grew during the first four years of the Third Five-Year Plan by 17.07 per cent, whereas the figure for the manufacturing industry was 53.8 per cent.

The groundwork for modern industry in Indonesia was laid in the years of the "new order". The first full-cycle iron-and-steel works (P. T. Krakatau Steel), the first aluminum factory (P. T. Inalum), and large cement, carbamide, oil products and condensed gas production facilities were built and put into operation. Oil extraction has been developing at a rapid pace, and Indonesia has now become one of the ten leading oil producers in the capitalist world.

Furthermore, the "green revolution" programme considerably boosted agricultural production. This gave Indonesian leaders grounds to hope that in the near future they will achieve self-reliance in rice which is the country's staple food.

On an average the country's rice yields increased from 2.38 tons per hectare in 1981 to 2.57 tons in 1982 when 23.2 million tons of rice were harvested. In 1983 the rice yield had already reached 23.9 million tons, ie, a three per cent increase as compared with the preceding year. Taking into account that the population grows at an average rate of 2.3 per cent annually, this signifies a step towards self-reliance in rice production.

The curbing of inflation that went down from 650 per cent in 1966 to 8.4 per cent in 1982-1983 was also an impressive achievement.

A question arises: have the achievements gained by the country in the years of the "new order" altered Indonesia's status within the system of the world capitalist economy? It appears that no radical changes have occurred in this respect. True, Indonesia has become a big producer and exporter of oil which enabled the country to expand the financial base for national development considerably and reduce somewhat its dependence on the West. Certain changes have occurred in the structure of the economy, and industry is growing at a faster rate. At the same time, however, industrial development is still at the import substitution phase, and Indonesia continues to specialise in mineral and farm commodity exports. Moreover, cheap labour and a wealth of natural resources are still primary factors attracting foreign investors. In addition, Indonesia remains dependent on imports of finished industrial products, modern technology and foodstuffs, and altogether, its further economic growth largely depends on the influx of foreign capital.

Thus, it is evident that Indonesia's position in the world capitalist economy is still inferior, and this leads to the preservation and sometimes to the intensification of its economic dependence on the West. This makes itself felt, among other things, in the considerable rise in the foreign debt, the repayment of which in fact brings to naught all the advantages Indonesia gains by being an oil-exporting country.

From 1960 to 1980 annual oil production in Indonesia increased from 20.6 million to 95 million tons. However, at present, in accordance with a decision by OPEC, Indonesia's oil production quota has been reduced from 1.6 million to 1.3 million barrels per day. Thus, if Indonesia sticks to the OPEC-established level, it will produce 75.5 million tons of oil a year, i.e., 20 million tons less than the record level of 1979.

It should further be pointed out that, more often than not, Indonesia faces great difficulty selling its crude oil which accounts for lion's share of Jakarta's export earnings. This demonstrates once again that excessive dependence on the developed capitalist countries in the sphere of trade and the developed capitalist countries in the sphere of trade and economics and a lopsided orientation towards the West may bring Indonesia to the brink of an economic crisis.

The big foreign investments which flooded into Indonesia after the "open-door" policy was announced in 1967 providing the country with broad access of foreign capital was another major factor in Indonesia's economic development under the military regime. By the beginning of 1984 the amount of

approved foreign investment in the Indonesian economy since 1967 stood at \$14.5 billion (oil production excluded).

Of course, the considerable inflow of foreign capital should not be assessed, as one may think, from the standpoint of Indonesia's greater dependence on the West. These investments undoubtedly promoted, to a considerable degree, its economic growth.

Foreign investors are attracted to Indonesia, first, by the opportunity to take part in the exploitation of the country's natural resources, which include large deposits of oil, natural gas, tin, nickel, bauxites, copper, and valuable kinds of timber; second, by cheap labour: even as Southeast Asian standards it is extremely inexpensive (for example, late in the 1970s an unskilled Indonesian worker operating on electronics company's assembly line received 15 cents an hour, while his counterpart in Malaysia earned 50 cents and those in Singapore and Hong Kong earned one dollar); and third, by the favourable investment climate.

Finally, foreign credits, which have been given to the ruling regime for over 11 years in considerable amounts and on rather easy terms serve as another important factor in the Indonesian "economic miracle" which is so widely advertised in the West. However, Indonesia and its people have to pay dearly for this. The country's foreign debt grew from \$2.3 billion in 1966 to \$17.8 billion at the end of 1983 (the IBRD accounts for \$6.9 billion of that sum). Significantly, in 1982 and 1983 payments on that debt already amounted to 22 per cent of the value of Indonesian exports.

Thus, it is quite clear that certain economic achievements were connected with the operation of a limited range of factors of temporary nature, and this determined the instability of these successes. The inordinate emphasis placed on developing relations with the biggest capitalist powers--the U.S. and Japan--determined the vulnerability of the Indonesian economy which made itself felt when, during the general slump in the capitalist economy, the rate of economic growth slowed down considerably. As a result, in 1982 and 1983 the growth rate in the manufacturing industry was 1.2 and 2.2 per cent respectively, while in agriculture it was 2.1 and 1.5 per cent. Production in the mining industry which depends most on the world market dropped significantly.

Indonesia's excessive dependence on oil exports has also had a pernicious effect on its revenue. During the "oil boom" Jakarta thought that the inexhaustible influx of petro-dollars would continue to feed and support the country's economic development, but in the early 1980s the situation changed dramatically. When the demand for oil dropped, the value of Indonesian exports in general decreased from \$22.3 billion in 1981 to \$19.7 billion in 1982. In a bid to avoid a sharp decrease in export earnings, the Indonesian government decided in January 1982 to diversify the exports to the utmost but a highly unfavorable situation took shape in the world, in regard to many other products as well. Early in the 1980s the prices for such traditional Indonesian exports as natural rubber, coffee, tea, palm oil and plywood fell.

The Indonesian government's new policy which is aimed at encouraging exports provides for lower export duties, simpler exporting procedures, cheaper credits for exporters and also the application of the so-called "counter-purchase" practice which means that in case of large-scale government purchases abroad worth more than 500 million rupiahs, Indonesia demands that the supplier purchase goods (oil and gas excluded) worth the same amount.

Despite all these measures, however, the value of Indonesian exports decreased again during the 1982/83 fiscal year and amounted to \$18.8 billion. Moreover, the value of oil exports, as compared with the previous fiscal year, dropped from \$16.5 billion to \$12.5 billion, while the value of exports, other than gas and oil fell from \$4.2 billion to \$3.8 billion. Particularly hard hit were exports of ready-made goods, garments in the first place, to the Common Market countries due to the protectionist measures adopted by the EEC. Only condensed gas exports which reached \$2.4 billion increased.

At a time when the lopsided orientation towards the West is so adversely affecting the country's economy, many people in Indonesia are coming to realise the need to develop closer commercial and economic ties with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community. This idea is favoured by many political and public figures. The visit to the Soviet Union in 1984 of Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Mr. Kusumaatmadja and a delegation of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as the visits to Indonesia of Soviet delegations headed by the USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa, Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade Ivan Grishin and a delegation of the USSR Supreme Soviet laid good foundations for the development of the Soviet-Indonesian economic relations.

On the eve of his visit to the Soviet Union the Indonesian Foreign Minister pointed out that "Indonesia considers good relations with the USSR to be an important aspect of its foreign policy". Touching on the subject of commercial ties between the states, M. Kusumaatmadja stressed that there were opportunities for increasing exports of rubber, timber, coffee, tin, big tyres, textiles and electronics to the Soviet Union and for buying chemicals, fertilizer and other commodities in the USSR.

The visit to the USSR of the Minister-Coordinator of Economy, Financial and Industrial Affairs and National Development, A. Wardhana in 1984 was a milestone in Soviet-Indonesian cooperation. In the course of his visit a protocol concerning negotiations on the development of trade and economic cooperation between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia was signed. It reflected the agreement reached by the two sides on the further development and deepening of Soviet-Indonesian trade and economic ties. There are broad opportunities for cooperation between the two countries in other spheres as well.

A considerable reduction in exports and an increase in imports resulted in a sharp rise in Indonesia's foreign trade deficit in 1982. Both foreign loans and the country's gold-and-hard currency reserves, which by the end of the 1982/83 fiscal year amounted to \$3.3 billion as opposed to \$7.35 billion at the start of the 1981-82 fiscal year were used to compensate for the deficit. As a result, the government of Indonesia devalued the rupiah motivating this

measure by the need to stimulate exports, limit imports improve the balance of foreign trade and increase rupiah reserves in order to finance a number of government programmes.

The government was also compelled to abandon the building of four large plants with a total value of \$5 billion, plants which were to have produced alumina, olefin, aromatic substances and petroleum products.

Indonesia's economic and monetary financial situation showed no basic change in 1984 either, despite some acceleration in the rate of growth and an increase in monetary reserves.

Indonesia still faces a number of severe socio-economic problems, and the most outstanding of these is the problem of employment. At present Indonesia has a population of about 153 million which increases by 2.3 per cent every year. The labour force expands annually by almost two million. It is expected that during the current five-year period alone it will increase by 9.3 million. Growth like this will exacerbate the problem of unemployment, which serves as a source of constant social tension. According to the Indonesian economist B. Sasono, over 50 per cent of those between the ages of 15 to 35 are unemployed. As a rule, the official data give a fraction of the actual numbers: a figure amounting to two per cent of the work force is cited. However, according to the former Minister of Labour and Migration H. Zain, the unemployed constitute from 12 to 20 per cent of the able-bodied population in Jakarta, West Java, Jambi, Bengkulu, 19 percent in Moluccas, 19.6 percent in Eastern Kalimantan, and so on.

When determining the number of unemployed and semi-unemployed 20 million appears to be the most realistic figure if one takes into consideration the immense number of "surplus people" in the countryside, above all in Java where the number of landless peasants is particularly great.

While capitalism continues to develop in Indonesia, a genuine solution to the unemployment problem is inconceivable; however, it is possible to apply measures capable of somewhat alleviating this problem which is particularly acute in Java. Accounting for only seven per cent of Indonesia's territory, it is home for about 80 per cent of the country's able-bodied population. But even on this overpopulated island where 4 percent of its inhabitants own 25 per cent of land, the pressure of unemployment would have not been so strong if land were redistributed. However, those few successes which resulted from the land reform of 1960 were brought to naught.

The provision of landless peasants with land and a job is linked with the widely advertised migration programme under which thousands of peasant families from Java, Madura, Bali and Lombok would resettle on sparsely-populated islands thus adding to the latter's development. During the Third Five-Year Plan 500,000 families were supposed to migrate but despite the fact that the flow of migrants grows with each year that passes, the target figures have not as yet been achieved. In 1981-1982, 80.1 thousand families were resettled while the corresponding figures for 1982-1984 is 120.4 thousand. However, even if the migration plan is fulfilled, it is impossible under

the prevailing conditions to solve the problem of overpopulation because in Java alone the population grows by 1.7-1.8 million annually.

Great hopes are pinned in Indonesia on the development of different forms of small-scale industry in which, according to official data, 4.2 million people or 86 per cent of the manufacturing industry workers were employed in mid-1970s. Small-scale production, not only reduces the pressure brought to bear on society by unemployment, but also occupies an essential place in the national economy, providing the least well-off strata of society with consumer goods. At the same time, small-scale production can play an important part in introducing more productive machinery on small farms. Today, modern types of industrial and agricultural production represent separate enclaves in the Indonesian economy. Primarily this economy is made up of small traditional farmsteads where productive forces are at an extremely low level of development and modern technology cannot yet be used. That is why it appears that the development of small industry that will bring about the gradual introduction of increasingly complicated technology will contribute to the growth of productive forces and bring the latter to the level of modern technology. It seems that this is the idea behind the "intermediate technology" which is now being introduced everywhere in developing countries.

Corruption, which has struck deep roots in Indonesian society, is another reason for social tension, apart from unemployment. According to the American press, up to 30 per cent of money earmarked for development projects remains in the pockets of the corrupt high-ranking officials. Since June 1977 a special campaign against corruption has been underway in Indonesia. By the start of 1983, 7,839 cases of corruption involving 11,319 government officials had been registered. However, this is truly just a drop in the bucket as bribery by government officials in Indonesia today has become the norm.

In conclusion it can be said that Indonesia's economic achievements during the "new order" reflect predominantly quantitative rather than qualitative changes in Indonesia's economy. For example, the average per capita income, which rose up to \$520 in 1982, made it possible to include Indonesia in the middle range of developing countries. In fact, however, incomes in Indonesian society are distributed highly unevenly.

Thus, the current economic situation demonstrates convincingly that, despite some successes scored by the "new order" regime, Indonesia on the whole remains an agrarian-raw material periphery of the world capitalist economy. The country is witnessing economic and social polarisation and the deepening of the contradictions inherent in the capitalist road of development.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

FRENCH PACIFIC POLICY, NEW CALEDONIA'S PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

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[Article by Nikolai Rubtsov]

[Text] Since the autumn of 1984 New Caldeonia, a French "overseas territory", located 20,000 kilometres from the mother country, has attracted the attention of the world mass media. The Melanesians (Kanakaks), the indigenous population of this archipelago occupying an area of 19,000 square kilometres with some 150,000 inhabitants, are demanding that independence be granted to New Caledonia. Never before have these actions been so well organised on such a massive scale. The interests of the Kanaks are represented by the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), which is composed of five political parties as well as a number of public organisations supporting self-determination and independence. The formation of a provisional government for the future state of Kanaks has been announced at a Front Congress. The demands of the indigenous population have the full support of every independent state in the South Pacific.

The situation on the island is the logical result of the more than 130 years of French colonial rule in New Caledonia. This archipelago, like a multitude of other islands in the South Pacific, was first explored by the British sailor James Cook in 1774.¹ He also gave the island its present name because its shores reminded him of Scotland. From economic viewpoint, New Caledonia originally was of little interest to Europeans. Its flora and fauna are sparse as compared with the other Pacific islands and when in 1853 Admiral Despointes first hoisted the French flag over New Caledonia, France did not have any particular plans for the colonisation of the island. The island was seized primarily to outstrip the British in the colony numbers game. For ten years the only reminder of the colonial annexation of New Caledonia was a few military posts.

The situation changed when Emperor Napoleon III decided to exile prisoners to New Caledonia. From 1863 to 1897 more than 40,000 convicts were sent to the island to serve their terms of imprisonment.

¹ Before Cook the French navigator Bourgainville approached the shores of New Caledonia in 1768 but did not land on the island.

New Caledonia's further economic development was determined by the discovery of huge deposits of nickel ore there in 1865. For many years it was the world's biggest supplier of concentrated nickel ore; 70 per cent of all the nickel mined in the world in the 19th century came from New Caledonia.

In order to have more Europeans stay on the island the French government began to offer small plots of land to settlers from Europe and to former convicts once they had completed their sentences. The French authorities commandeered the lands of the aborigines who had lived there four milleniums. The Melanesians rebelled in 1878 under the leadership of Chief Atai but the uprising was drowned in blood. The Kanaks were resettled on reservations in mountainous areas and the Loyaute archipelago. The total area of the reservations amounted to a mere fifth of New Caledonia.

As attempts to make the local population work on farms and in mines ended in failure and the forced labour of convicts was abolished, the demand for manpower increased. Workers from Southeast Asia began to arrive in New Caledonia at the end of the 19th century. Thus, the island gained a third ethnic group, the Asians.

The French Constitution of 1946 abolished the more odious elements of traditional colonialism. An elective body, the Main Council, was formed in New Caledonia. But not only was it purely advisory in function, it represented the white settlers, the Caldoches, exclusively. At the 1950 elections, not a single of the 30,000 Melanesians was elected to it.

The growth of the indigenous population's national self-consciousness, the intensification of the struggle for its rights and the appearance of political parties expressing the interests of Kanaks forced the French government to expand this "overseas territory's" autonomy. A Territorial Assembly and a Government Council were set up on the basis of the 1957 "framework law", universal suffrage by direct ballot was introduced and the powers of local government were noticeably expanded. But soon even these limited reforms began to run counter to the colonial aims of the French ruling circles and the powers of local government began to be restricted. No substantial change took place in this field until the early 1980s.

The island's economy developed somewhat more dynamically than did the political system. The mining of nickel was expanded in the post-war period. On the whole New Caledonia accounts for 30 per cent of the world's reserves of this metal and is the third largest producer of nickel ore in the world.

Mining accounts for 80 to 90 per cent of the territory's exports. Although the lion's share of the profits are pocketed by French monopoly capital the development of mining and metallurgy has spurred on the progress of other branches of the economy and ensured the creation of a ramified infrastructure.

Small construction, wood-working, food and chemical enterprises were built after the war and numerous small workshops sprang up at that time. The local bourgeoisie of French origin played the leading role in this.

But the hyperthrophied development of mining and the "tertiary" industries had a negative effect on agriculture which has stagnated since the war. The territory has to import most of its foodstuffs with the exception of beef. Agriculture accounts only for 3-5 per cent of the gross domestic product although it employs about 15 per cent of the population, including a third of the indigenous population.

The negative effects of the lop-sided economy became especially noticeable in the 1980s when New Caledonia's economy began to flounder due to the declining demand for nickel on the world market.

Still the general quantitative indicators of New Caledonia's level of economic development are quite positive. The average per capita gross domestic product exceeds 7,000 American dollars a year. The administrative centre of the territory--Noumea--which boasts a population of more than 60,000 looks much like a French city on the Mediterranean with its luxury hotels, excellent restaurants and other outward signs of bourgeois well-being. But visitors to the island are shocked by the tremendous gap between the standard of living enjoyed by the Europeans and that of the indigenous population. The Kanaks live in squalid huts that stand out in sharp contrast to the plush villas of the local bourgeoisie. Their incomes are only a quarter of those Europeans receive.

Those members of the indigenous population who live in the countryside are not any better off. To this day the Kanaks primarily live on reservations. As a result of the expropriation of land over the years, by the early 1980s 900 white settlers, half of whom lived in Noumea, owned 430,000 hectares of land while 24,000 Melanesians owned 163,000 hectares of land; moreover, it is the land which is least suitable for agriculture. In other words, the Kanaks, who account for 43 per cent of the population remain its most deprived group.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the indigenous population's struggle for its rights entered a new stage. The Kanak working class had grown in strength and numbers by then. A local French-educated Melanesian intelligentsia appeared and initiated a movement for the independence of New Caledonia. The demands of the Kanaks have the most resolute support of the peoples of the other Pacific islands which gained independence in the 1970s.

But at the same time the opponents of independence--the overwhelming majority of the Europeans and representatives of some other non-indigenous ethnic groups which fear for their well-being have also become more active. These fears are fuelled by the local mass media and the actions of right-wing extremist and racist groups that have murdered dozens of Melanesians.

The situation on the island became especially tense in the autumn of 1981 when right-wing forces killed the General Secretary of the Caledonian Union Party, Pierre Declercq, a Frenchman by origin. This provoked reprisals by the Melanesian population. Proponents and opponents of independence clashed in many places, dozens of Melanesians were arrested and a spontaneous movement to seize the lands of European colonists flared up in the countryside.

The Mitterrand government was compelled to give priority to the situation in the territory. This resulted in the adoption of a decree on reforms in New Caledonia. It provides for the holding of a referendum on the island in 1989 on the future status of the territory and in the meantime for a reorganisation of the administrative structure, increased autonomy for local government (the Territorial Assembly and the Government Council), the transfer to the latter of all executive power from the High Commissioner appointed by Paris, greater participation by the indigenous population in government, in particular the creation of the Territorial Assembly of a second, Melanesian chamber, and the introduction of "custom" elements (traditions) in the system of government. The island's government received the right to buy or confiscate lands that are either fallow or used inadequately and then handed them over to Kanak communities. The system of taxation was also altered: an income tax was introduced and levied, in effect, on people with high incomes.

But these measures did not satisfy the advocates of independence nor the opponents of a divorce from France, the latter seeing them as too big concession to the Melanesians and obstructing their implementation in every way.

For this reason the decree on reforms not only did not ease but, on the contrary, intensified the political struggle in New Caledonia. Tensions remained high. The months from September to December 1984 witnessed a consolidation, one, of forces which supported the immediate granting of independence (FLNKS) and, two, of its opponents, whose most influential organisation was the Association for Caledonia as Part of the Republic.

For the Kanak Front the main question is suffrage. Considering the population's present ethnic composition resulting from the colonial immigration policy which was conducted for more than a century, the outcome of the vote on the future status of the territory is all too obvious. The preponderance of non-Kanaks in local government is also inevitable. For this reason the supporters of independence demand that suffrage be given only to those whose parents have been living in New Caledonia for a lengthy period of time. Radical groups demand that the Kanak population alone be allowed to vote. The French government did not accept these demands. In response, the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front started to form its own governmental bodies in November 1984. The leader of the Front, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, called for a boycott of Territorial Assembly elections. As a result only slightly more than a half of the electorate, and in the countryside only 25 per cent, took part in the November 18 elections. Thirty-four of the 42 seats in the Assembly went to the Association for Caledonia as Part of the Republic headed by "the richest man in New Caledonia" Jacques Lafleur.

The situation worsened even more. The Kanak Front demanded that the results of the elections be declared void. There were numerous armed clashes between Melanesians and the police.

The struggle reached its highest point on December 7, 1984 when racists killed nine Melanesians, among them two brothers of the Front's leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou, French High Commissioner E. Pisani introduced martial law. Reinforcements of security forces, helicopters and armoured cars were shipped

to New Caledonia. On January 12, 1985 the gendarmes shot down one of the Front's leaders E. Machoro, who was particularly popular with young Kanaks. On January 19, New Caledonia was visited by Mitterrand who conducted talks with the main political groups. But as was to be expected, the tension did not subside. The French government decided to hold the referendum on the future of the territory although its terms are continuously altered, and following the last delay it will not take place before 1987. (E. Pisani insisted on 1985).

The so-called "Pisani project" came into being providing for the conversion of New Caledonia into a state "associated" with France with defense- and foreign affairs-related issues falling within the jurisdiction of the French government. However, the "Pisani project" suited neither the National Front nor the opponents of independence. In France it found itself in the "crossfire" of criticism from the "right" and from the "left". The alternative "Fabius project" was put forward which was more to the liking of opponents of independence. According to this project, New Caledonia is to be divided into four regions with representatives elected to regional assemblies. The "congress of the territory" is to be set up on the basis of these assemblies perpetuating in fact former colonial structures.

It should be stressed that objectively French monopoly capital displays great interest in preserving the New Caledonia's colonial status. This is explained not only by unique nickel deposits but by the fact that the island accommodates French air force and navy bases. In 1985, a decision was made to enlarge and retool these bases to make them capable of receiving nuclear submarines and heavy transport warplanes. In addition, an American satellite tracking station is located there. Imperialist circles believe that the decolonisation of New Caledonia could provide a dangerous example for the people of Polynesia which plays a special role in Paris's military-political strategy in connection with the continuing French nuclear weapons tests there. Furthermore, the struggle of the Kanaks sets an example for the population of French possessions on the other side of the globe, in the Caribbean basin, where a consolidation of pro-independence forces has also been observed.

On the question of New Caledonia the French conservative parties, which chiefly express the interests of the monopolies, rigidly oppose autonomy. If they come to power, they declare, they will put an end to the policy of reforms pursued by the Socialists.

Reactionaries are countered by French Communists and other progressive who demanded that the government take a course with an eye to legitimate rights and aspirations of New Caledonia's native population.

The struggle of the Kanak people for independence is continuing. The leaders of the National Front declare that the struggle is not going to cease until their just demands are met.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

EGYPTIAN RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION TO SADAT'S POLICIES EXAMINED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 5, Sep-Oct 85 pp 75-77, 80

[Article by Yuri Sedov]

[Text] Back in 1914 Russian Academician Vasily Bartold wrote that Islam was always used "not so much as a religious but more as a political doctrine, in most cases as a means for meeting certain political aims".¹

Today the danger that religion will be used by reactionary forces to meet anti-popular ends is especially great. Evidence of this can be found in the actions of the Iranian theocracy and in what the former Egyptian President, the inglorious Anwar Sadat did in his lifetime.

Acting under Gamal Abdel Nasser as the regime's "Islamic voice"² Sadat gave himself the reputation of being a deeply religious man. The emphasis in his policies on a greater Islamisation of social life was expected to balance his "new" pro-Western course, patently unpopular among the Arabs, and justify at the same time the severance of relations with the socialist countries, which, as he used to say, were dominated by the "atheistic" ideology.

The "pious" President saw Nasser's supporters and the Communists as the main obstacle to Egypt's reorientation towards a new policy and accused them therefore of atheism hoping to direct the entire "religious charge" of Egyptian society against them. He tried to play on Islamic sentiments (incidentally, anti-Western by nature) which were objectively mounting on "the grassroots" level, on the conviction of the right-wing Moslem clergy that communism and Islam were irreconcilable enemies both in terms of ideology and economy, and, finally, on the increasing activities of fundamentalist religious group. For example, Sadat granted some freedom of action to the "Moslem Brothers" organisation, showed tolerance towards extremist organisations ("At-Takfir va l hidjra", "Junud Allah" and others) and tried to win over student Moslem associations. As the Western press reported, he secretly gave money and even weapons to certain conservative Islamic organisations.

Naturally, this was all done not for the sake of religion per se. By establishing contact with the "Moslem Brothers" for example, Sadat hoped to win *Riyadh's* favour.

These attempts to build friendly relations with Riyadh on a religious foundation were, in certain ways, inconvenient for Sadat. Conservative Moslem circles in Saudi Arabia received an opportunity to expand their ties with the Egyptian clergy and regarded one of the most important clergymen, the Grand Sheikh of Cairo Al-Azkhar Theological University, Abdel Khalim Mahmud, as "their man". Acting as a lobbyist, he helped increase the influence of Islamic groups in government institutions and the press and took a tough stand on certain aspects of Sadat's "liberalisation" policy. That slowed down Egypt's shift towards the West and strengthened the "Moslem Brothers" which later became a powerful opponent of the government. Abdel Khalim Mahmud lived up to the regime's hopes in one major respect, however: the Sheikh made statements in which he asserted that "communism is an evil, a form of ignorance and its coexistence with Islam in one country is impossible".

The first Egyptian flag hoisted on the Eastern bank of the Suez Canal after it was crossed in October 1973 was presented to the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azkhar. The Ulemas viewed the outcome of the operation as a milestone in the history of Islam, a military victory the likes of which the Arabs had not seen since the time of Saladin who defeated the crusaders at Hattin in 1187 and recaptured their feeling of national self-respect believed that their country and army were guided by divine providence.

"War," as Lenin pointed out, "does not alter the direction of pre-war policies, but only accelerates their development."³

The 1973 war speeded up "ripening" of the pro-Western sentiments of the Egyptian President who gave himself the credit for Arab military victories and decided that he was strong enough to launch an offensive on the entire political, social and economic structure that had grown up under Nasser. By the summer of 1977 he had completed its destruction and established what was, in fact, a military and police dictatorship with a multi-party facade. Sadat threw open the doors of the Egyptian economy to foreign capital. Having decided that he had secured his position on the home front Sadat went with Washington's blessing, on a "Historic mission" to Jerusalem in November 1977 and signed first, the Camp David Accords in September 1978 and then a separate "peace treaty" with Israel in March 1979. All that led to Egypt's isolation in the Arab world, a growing split in the latter, increased aggressiveness on the part of Israel and the expansion of the American military presence in the region.

But neither that "peace" nor Sadat's home policy brought Egypt social equality and prosperity he had promised. At a time when social and economic contradictions were growing and the protests of the Egyptians against the rapprochement with Israel, (at the expense of which relations had been severed with almost every Arab country) were mounting, opposition Moslem groups multiplied and became increasingly active. More and more often discussions at mosques, the only places uncontrolled, for the most part, by the regime were independent opinions could be expressed, drifted away from religious topics. Politicians who were not allowed access to the mass media were given the floor there.

The religious organisations that had opposed Sadat before his trip to Jerusalem were mostly extremist groups which enjoyed little or no popular support. From time to time they let their existence be known. In July 1977 members of "At Takfir va l hidjra" kidnapped and killed Sheikh Zakhabi whom they associated with that official section of Islam which was obedient to the regime. Significantly, the farther Sadat went in improving relations with Israel, the more intolerant he became of Islamic extremists. The trial of the Zakhabi kidnappers ended immediately after the President's trip to Jerusalem (late November-early December 1977), with the passing of severe sentences on behalf of the "community of faithful Moslem believers" what actually was to be taken as the defence of official Islam from the heretics who had fallen into the "devil's embrace". The regime's relations with the country's most influential religious organisation--the "Moslem Brothers"--were, in fact, developing in keeping with the principles of "peaceful co-existence". Beginning in 1976 Sadat (who was under some pressure from Saudi Arabia) allowed the "Moslem Brothers" to publish two magazines--AD-DAAVA and AL ITISAM--which, prior to the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli agreement, did not criticise the Egyptian government too freely. The two magazines launched a campaign to clear the administrative apparatus of Nasser's followers and dissolve the National-Progressive (left-wing) Party whose atheistic nature ran counter, in their opinion, to the Constitution that proclaimed Islam the state religion. This was one issue on which their views coincided with those of the official clergy.

After November 1977 the clergy obedient to the regime found a sufficient number of arguments in Islamic teaching to justify "peace" with Israel. "The Ulemas of Al Azkhar", a fetwa made public in May 1979 stated, "are certain that the Egyptian-Israeli treaty conforms with the laws of Islam. It was signed from a position of strength after Egypt had fought the holy battle and won a victory in the Ramadan war." The fetwa cited as a precedent the treaty that the prophet Muhammed had signed with the Meccans in 628.

But soon there was no trace of the loyalty which the "Moslem Brothers" had once displayed towards the regime. In their opinion, Sadat's actions ran completely counter to Islam. AD-DAAVA devoted its pages to articles which totally rejected the bargaining over occupied Arab territories and, in particular, over Islamic shrines in Jerusalem. Offering numerous examples from the Koran, the Prophet's life and the history of Islam the authors of these articles proved that it was "impossible to live in peace with the Israelis". Sadat's policy already began to boomerang....

The Iranian revolution gave a fresh impetus to the fundamentalist movement in Egypt (and throughout the Moslem world). Teheran made no secret out of the fact that it was interested in a chain of events that would lead to the replacement of the secular government by a religious one in Egypt. THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote on February 25, 1979 that top Iranian officials viewed Egypt as the most vulnerable country in terms of an Islamic uprising of the kind that led to the Shah's removal. Teheran pinned its hopes on the "Moslem Brothers" in particular.

It would be wrong, of course, to say that the religious situation in Egypt at that time was similar to the pre-revolutionary state of affairs in Iran.

While the Iranian Shiite clergy had long opposed the government, the Egyptian Sunni Ulemas had been controlled by the state back in the 19th century and functioned from that time on, with certain exceptions, as its officials.⁴ That was why Egyptian Islam posed considerably less danger to the regime than Iranian Islam did.

Nevertheless Sadat kept the lessons of the Iranian revolution in mind and, wishing to demonstrate to the West, cooperation with which he openly set his sights on, the "similarity" between the Egyptian social system and those of capitalist countries, the Egyptian President began taking steps to lessen the impact the religion that he had praised so highly had on the country's political life. Up until the last day of his life he tried desperately to break the vicious circle of that contradiction.

Camp David was a watershed in relations between the regime and the religious opposition which almost unanimously declared the separate "peace" to be a sell-out of the common Arab Cause and a betrayal of Islam. The statement by Lebanese Prime-Minister Chafic Wazzan--"Camp David killed Sadat"--became proverbial.

As Egypt sank deeper and deeper in the quagmire of the deal with Israel, the "Moslem Brothers" were expanding their anti-Sadat activities and by 1981 they were attacking the regime's policies from all directions (with the possible exception of its denunciation of the progressive Baath government in Syria that was resolutely suppressing the terror of the local "Moslem Brothers").

One of the chief factors behind this development in "Moslem Brothers" activities was Riyadh's negative attitude towards the Camp David deal as it was struck by Sadat. Given their class interests, the Saudi leaders had no reason to oppose a settlement in the spirit of Camp David. But claiming leadership of the Arab and Moslem worlds and conscious of popular sentiment in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution, Saudi Arabia could not give up its demand that the Western Bank, and, above all, East Jerusalem where the third most important Islamic shrine--the Al Aqsa Mosque--is situated be returned to the Arabs. "At the moment when the flame of Islam", the French weekly LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR wrote, "was growing everywhere there could be no talk of giving support to Sadat's sacrilegious initiative.... The Saudis had to join, however, reluctantly, the plan of the staunch in Baghdad [concerning the isolation and boycott of Egypt.--Y.S.].

Sadat who had scored quite a few points in Riyadh on anti-communism and flirtations with Islam lost most of the support it had had from Saudi Arabia which, together with almost all of the other Arab states, severed relations with Egypt in April 1979.

The sharp criticism of Camp David by Islamic movements and the Iranian revolution cooled Sadat's "religious fervour". At that time he put forward the following slogan: "No politics in religion, and no religion in politics." Already in May 1979 he did not allow either the "Moslem Brothers" or the

Communists to nominate candidates for election to Egypt's People's Assembly and he soon banned student Islamic associations controlled by the "Moslem Brothers".

In the autumn of 1981 Sadat banned the activities of the "Moslem Brothers" and issued an order for the arrest of many of its leaders. Simultaneously one and a half thousand more members of the opposition, and primarily of the left-wing opposition, were detained, some newspapers and magazines were closed down, state control was established over most of the country's mosques and instructions were issued to censor sermons.

These repressive measures destroyed the impression that Egypt was a "bulwark of democracy" in the Arab world that Sadat had been trying to create in the West for 10 years and showed how deep the opposition to Camp David was in Egypt. But as the Israeli newspaper, the JERUSALEM POST, noted the fact that Sadat began carrying out these measures a week after his meeting with Begin in Alexandria indicated that the Egyptian President was determined to continue improving relations with Tel Aviv despite domestic opposition and the displeasure of Arab countries.

The religious strife between the Moslems and the Copts, Monophysitic Christians, who number somewhere between 3 to 5 million in Egypt, served as the pretext for launching the reprisals of the autumn of 1981. Though Sadat himself and his propaganda machine called for "national peace", an analysis of the situation shows that the inter-communal religious strife was incited "from above" in keeping with the "divide-and-rule" principle. Fomented by the regime this strife diverted the energy of the Islamic movement from anti-government protests to battles with Christians and also served as a pretext for clamping down on the opposition as a whole. Religious clashes in Egypt usually occurred when Sadat's policies had suffered another setback or when he was preparing for another capitulatory move.

On October 6, 1981 during a military parade held to mark the anniversary of the October war Sadat was killed by religious extremists. In the course of the investigation which followed the head of the assassins, 24-year-old Lieutenant Khaled Islambouly gave three main motives for his actions: the existence in the country of legislation that conflicted with Islamic law; the separate treaty with Israel and the arrests of Moslem leaders. After the death sentence was read he declared: "I'm accused of killing an infidel--I'm proud of it."

As well-known Egyptian author and journalist M. Heikal has stated, many Egyptians treat Khaled Islambouly and the other conspirators as national heroes. In his book *The Autumn of Wrath: The History of the Beginning and End of Anwar Sadat* he wrote: "In contrast to the assassins of John and Robert Kennedy, and of Martin Luther King, to persons who made attempts on the life of the Pope--declassé elements isolated from society--the group of soldiers and officers who removed Sadat from the political scene expressed the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of Egyptians."

Even prior to the October events Washington was apparently alarmed by the presence of members of Islamic opposition groups in the Egyptian armed forces (as well as with the growth of the influence the opposition had on Egyptian society as a whole). On October 14, 1981 the Associated Press reported that one American diplomat in Cairo was given a special task to analyse the impact of the religious movement on army personnel. A Beirut magazine, AL-MUSTAKBAL, wrote that Washington "has serious apprehensions concerning the loyalty of the Egyptian army to the regime", and it informed the new President, Hosni Mubarak, of the "deep infiltration of supporters of Moslem extremist groups and other opposition movements into the armed forces and the police". That report was hardly a revelation to the country's authorities: a thorough investigation carried out after Sadat's assassination revealed the existence of contacts between the Moslem extremists and the military, including secret service officers. The army ranks were purged as a result.

This and other measures aimed at neutralising the Islamic movement in Egypt failed to reduce its level of activity. This was made evident by the reaction of Egyptian society to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon in 1982. The "moderate opposition" demanded that relations with Tel Aviv be curtailed and the religious opposition called for "a holy war" against Israel.

West German researcher G. Kremer claimed in an article published in the French magazine LE POLITIQUE ETRANGERE (v. III, 1983) entitled "Egypt Under Mubarak" that "the most serious threat to the existing system...emanates now as before, from extremist Islamic groups", though they were being prosecuted more severely than they had been previously. THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote in December 1983 that even though Sunni fundamentalists were under close government surveillance, they were exerting increasing pressure. The Supreme Judge of the Cairo criminal court, S. al Ashmawi, has declared that the call of "Moslem Brothers"--one of the most active fundamentalist groups in Egypt--for the introduction of Islamic law has acquired the nature of a political slogan.

In its battle against the Islamic opposition the country's new leadership is not only using repressive measures, but is also trying to separate off the opposition's "moderate" elements, who reject violence as a method of political action within the country, from the "incorrigible extremists". In the first year after Sadat's assassination the new leadership freed about four thousand "moderate" Moslem activists who were given an opportunity to publicly express their views on "true" Islam. Admittedly they criticize the new government but, together with spokesmen of the official clergy, they strongly denounce terrorism.

The new leadership pays special attention to Egyptian youth which, the country's leaders believe, has been misled and is therefore easily drawn towards the use of political violence camouflaged by Islamic slogans. To show young people the "correct road" education centres now devote more hours to the study of the Koran. Radio and television services broadcast more religious programmes. The ruling national-democratic and the opposition liberal-socialist parties have begun publishing religious weeklies: AL-LIVA AL-ISLAMI and AN NUR.

At the same time the authorities are making another attempt to attract certain opposition Islamic circles to their side. In June 1983, after 9 years of refusals and delays, they approved the establishment of a new party--Al-Umma. Its leader, 68-year-old Ahmed es Sibahi Avadalla denies that the party is a religious organisation (there is a ban in Egypt on the creation of religiously-based parties), but he declares at the same time that the party's primary objective "is to augment the Constitution with an article that would make Shariat the main source of legislation...since it and it alone can save us from every difficulty and privation". Avadalla has spoken in favour of the establishment of a world ecclesiastical Islamic authority to the post of the Egyptian Prime Minister. Islamic fundamentalism, first encouraged and then suppressed by Sadat, has still not laid down its arms.

Sadat clearly underestimated the conflicting nature of the influence religion has on the public consciousness. For some time his reliance on conservative Moslem circles made it easier for him to fight left-wing elements--opponents of the departure from socialist orientation. But his efforts to win the confidence of the capitalist world by establishing a pro-Western "democracy" in the country required that Islam's role in the life of the country be curtailed. The logical result of the "Westernisation" policy that Egypt pursued was greater social inequality and the polarisation of incomes, and this ran counter to Moslem egalitarian principles. Sadat's show of piety made against the background of the luxury in which he and his close associates lived as contrasted with the extreme poverty of the working people strengthened the dissatisfaction of the latter.

In the long run, Sadat who failed to break the vicious circle that he himself had created, proved to be a man who, figuratively speaking, had sown the wind and reaped a whirlwind.

FOOTNOTES

1. V. V. Bartold, Collected Works, Vol. 6, Moscow, 1960, p 402.
2. See E. Mortimer, Faith and Power. The Politics of Islam, London, 1982, p 287.
3. V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, p 163.
4. See M. Kramer, Political Islam, London, 1920, p 63.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

NAMIBIAN EMIGRE ON CONTINUATION OF LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 6, Nov-Dec 85 p 7

[Article by Muhammed Mongu, Namibian journalist]

[Text] Yuri Prolomov, the correspondent of our journal in West Africa, spoke in Lagos to Muhammed Mongu, a prominent figure in SWAPO, who, even after he was forced to emigrate, continues to fight, together with his compatriots, for the freedom of Namibia, and against racism and apartheid.

The African national liberation movement is deeply indebted to the Soviet Union, on whose initiative twenty-five years ago the 15th UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and peoples. The world community qualified the implementation of this decision as one of the top-priority issues of our day and age. That Declaration gave a fresh impetus to the liberation movement in Africa, Asia and Latin America, which has started much earlier, soon after the victory, with the decisive participation of the Soviet Union, over the most aggressive and reactionary forces of imperialism--Hitler's Germany and militaristic Japan. The rout of fascism also signified the collapse of racist theories which tried to substantiate the "right" of some nations to dominate over others. I am sure that every African who managed to catch radio reports about the successes of the Soviet Army fighting thousand of kilometres away from his native forests, savannahs or deserts, welcomed these successes, instinctively if not consciously, as his own.

Today, most of the African countries have gained national sovereignty and many of them have embarked on the road of radical social change and socialist orientation, which fact has dealt a mighty blow to imperialism, weakening its political and military positions and depriving it of its former undivided rule over vast areas for fabulously profitable investment, sources of cheap raw materials, and crucial markets.

However, struggle still continues in South Africa and Namibia where freedom and social progress are blocked by apartheid which is supported by Western powers.

The Reagan Administration has declared for all to hear that the United States "cannot abandon" a country which supported the U.S. in all its wars. This is nothing more than hypocritical rhetoric--although, who knows what Washington

is planning for the future? Washington also stressed that the United States is not going to give up a region of key strategic importance which, besides, is so rich in natural resources indispensable to the "free world". It becomes clear why Washington is doing everything in its power to help the racists retain their positions in Namibia, assist them in crushing SWAPO, which the White House considers to be "too leftist", force a neocolonialist puppet regime on that country, and turn its territory into a springboard for terroristic inroads against African progressive states.

Such are the long-range objectives of U.S. imperialism. But it would be erroneous to describe the ruling quarters and big business of South Africa as mere instruments in the hands of the West. They are out for their own interests as well, taking part in the development--or, more precisely, the plundering--of Namibian rich natural resources. The GNP of that country with a million population has reached \$1,250,000,000, which in terms of per capita income would break down to \$1,250, many times over the average African level and somewhat exceeding the world average. In reality, however, as a result of brutal exploitation by white capitalists from South Africa and Western corporations, the average Black Namibian gets under \$125 a year.

Namibian patriots do not wish to tolerate this situation any longer and are determined to put an end to Western exploitation and plunder. In order to crush the Namibian liberation movement headed by SWAPO, Pretoria has brought the number of its occupation troops in Namibia up to 80,000, declaring nearly half of the country's territory an "exclusion zone" and imposing martial law there. Despite the UN decisions on Namibia, South Africa is trying to set up a puppet "provisional government" in that country, at the same time stepping up its military action against SWAPO and all suspected sympathisers, arresting, torturing and killing civilians as well as SWAPO members. Yet resistance to the occupation regime is steadily growing and has now assumed a national scale.

In our struggle we are supported by progressive-minded people all over the world, by young African countries and other newly-independent states, the socialist community, and primarily the Soviet Union, whose solidarity results from the very nature of socialism, which rejects all forms of exploitation of man by man.

We will continue to support all Soviet initiatives directed at preserving world peace, which is now treated as never before by the aggressive policies of imperialism, especially that of the United States. If there is no peace on our planet, if there are military conflicts, imperialism will find it easier to suppress national liberation movements and deny young nations their right to self-determination. And a modern nuclear war, should it break out, will spare no one on earth.

We in southern Africa realise better than many others the threat posed by nuclear weapons because we ourselves might become a nuclear target of Pretoria which has been developing such weapons for quite some time and may already possess several A-bombs. It is no secret that South African nuclear scientists have been cooperating, and possibly continue to cooperate, with U.S. research centres.

Of course, most African nations are not yet aware of the fatal consequences of a nuclear catastrophe and have yet to be informed by their governments. But we are confident that if all people of good will join forces they will be able to prevent a third world war.

The revolutionary forces in southern Africa should be prepared to wage a long and hard struggle for the independence of Namibia and the eradication of apartheid. We are faced by an enemy who is strong, experienced and treacherous. It possesses a developed economy, a well-trained and equipped army, a powerful machine of repression, and will stop at nothing to retain the power that he has today. However, the successes scored by the national liberation movement over the recent years open new vistas for its continued rise. We may declare with all confidence that today our struggle is nearing its climax.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

ITALY'S COLONIAL, CURRENT AFRICAN POLICIES REVIEWED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 6, Nov-Dec 85 pp 8-11

[Article by Marina Nikolayeva, cand. sc. (hist.)]

[Text] The history of Minercio, a small town in the Sicilian backwaters, was always rather monotonous. It is not surprising therefore that early in 1983 its townsfolk prepared so enthusiastically for a major festival, the inauguration of an Africa-Europe gas pipe-line terminating there. The ceremony was to be attended by the three heads of the gas-pipe-line host countries. President Chadli Benjedid of Algeria, President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, and President Allesandro Pertini of Italy, which was to lend particular significance and solemnity to the ceremony. Minercio in spring-time preened itself for the reception of the high-ranking guests but its residents' efforts were wasted. On the insistence of Algeria and Tunisia, the ceremony was held in the Tunisian village of El-Havar.

This was a direct manifestation by the inhabitants of Maghreb of their resentment against Italy's implicit support of NATO's decision to deploy U.S. medium-range missiles in Sicily. EL-MOUDJAHID, the newspaper of Algeria's ruling FLN (Front de liberation national) voiced the opinion of all the peaceloving forces when it stated that the American missiles in Sicily would pose a direct threat to African security. The imperialist powers' schemes to create a "nuclear fist" in the Mediterranean are spearheaded against the USSR and the Arab and African national liberation movement.

The response of the majority of African nations to the impending deployment of cruise missiles in Italy graphically showed that the Italian authorities' voluntary submission to the diktat of the U.S. and NATO has banefully affected the Italo-African relations, and exposed yet again the precarious position of Italy which claims the role of a "suitable partner" for Africa and, in addition, of a middleman between "North" and "South" in general.

In recent years, the apologists of Italy's foreign policy have stepped up their efforts to advertise these claims. It is, for instance, an assumed thesis that because of the "temporarily short" and "territorially limited" colonial presence of Italy in Africa, it did not derive, in contrast with Great Britain and France, any significant benefit from Africa, but only familiarised itself better with the daily life, traditions, and customs of its peoples, and laid the groundwork for promoting relations of "friendship

and cooperation" between Italy and the African nations in the post-colonial period. Thus, a well-versed bourgeois scholar, A. Caroselli, claimed that Italy was alien to colonialism and that for three quarters of a century the Italians, known for their tested religious tolerance, their wise and magnanimous humanism, contributed to Africa's development and shared with it all the fruits of their ancient culture. None of this rhetoric can cross out the history of colonialism, however. It is well known that the Italian invasion of Africa was one of the most sanguinary in the continent's history.

The "civilising mission" myth is backed by the alleged faculty of the Italians to understand better (than other whites) the mentality, needs and aspirations of the Africans, since Italy itself is "South of the North" of sorts, and by other equally "forcible" arguments. Some statements, however, are remarkably indicative and frank. Thus, E. Prandini, Chairman of the National Cooperatives' League, actively making its way to the economy of some African states, maintains that Italy, given its political, economic, and social reality, must enjoy a privileged status in its relations with Africa for the sake of its own development.

For the sake of its own development.... This is the crux of the matter! In the currently worsening crisis in the world capitalist economy, Italian imperialism, "the imperialism of the poor", is ever more zealous to solve its problems at the expense of developing nations, and to jostle its Western allies and rivals on the African market as much as possible.

Italy is one of the world's poorest countries in respect to raw materials and, hence, it places the primary emphasis on foreign supplies of raw materials and energy. Italian business is particularly attracted by the enormous raw material potential, market capacity, and geographical proximity of the African continent.

Italy is interested in African countries primarily as trade partners. At present, the share of Africa in its trade is more than 60 per cent, the value of Italian imports outstripping its exports to that continent (in 1983 the ratio was 15 to 10 trillion lire*). It may seem that this is advantageous for the African countries, but let us not draw hasty conclusions.

Assessing the general pattern of trade between Africa and Italy, it should be borne in mind that oil and gas account for more than 50 per cent of Italy's imports from Africa, while the purchases of manufactured goods are very modest. It should also be noted that the official statistics do not take into account Italian arms deliveries to Africa, which grew 16-fold from 1972 to 1981, annually comprising 2.5 and more trillion lire now. Italy is the third biggest trader in arms in the capitalist world after the U.S. and France, leaving Britain and West Germany behind. In his book, *Armament: a New Development Model?* F. Battistelli states that the arms trade is the most secret and uncontrolled business in Italy.

*1,000 Italian lire are equal to about U.S. \$0.7.

The Milan-based PANORAMA magazine wrote that Italy both sells arms to any buyer and willingly trains foreign servicemen who, after they have mastered Italian military hardware, would persuade their governments to purchase it from the Italian manufacturers.

In addition, Italy turns a blind eye to their nationality: it trains Iranians, Somalians, Ethiopians, Chileans, Turks, and Arabs whose countries are or recently were at war, including with each other.

Italian arms exports to South Africa are particularly large, despite the UN Security Council embargo. Italy has delivered to the racist regime Augusta helicopters, M-113 armoured carriers manufactured by the Oto Melara company (a special version designed for suppressing the national liberation forces), the same company's 155-mm guns for M-109 tanks, and 76/62 ordinance for the South African Reshef corvettes, torpedoes, various small arms, including automatic, and P-68 Observer light reconnaissance aircraft manufactured by the Partenavia company.

In addition to finished goods, Italian firms sell arms licences to South Africa. Thus, under the Aeromacchi licence the South African Atlas Aircraft is manufacturing MB-326K aircraft to fight the rebels. The above-cited PANORAMA magazine wrote that in Italy the word "embargo" yields to the word "business".

Italy delivers arms to Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and other African countries.

According to A. Beretta, arms expert with the Italian Federation of Metal-Working Industry, the unscrupulous and almost uncontrolled large-scale arms deliveries testify to the fact that Italy "is encouraging a chain reaction in the arms sphere in the 'Third World'", which fags the immature economies of the emergent states, including African. Its activities often add fuel to the smouldering fire of conflicts between them.

This is confirmed specifically by Italy's stand regarding the Horn of Africa conflict, a traditional zone of its once colonial and, subsequently, neo-colonial interests. Somalia is a former Italian colony; Italy repeatedly (in 1885-1887, 1894-1896, and 1933-1941) tried to conquer Ethiopia. At present, it is trying to give the impression of taking an "unbiased" attitude towards the Somalia-Ethiopia conflict and to retain its positions in both countries, granting financial and technological assistance to both of them.

In recent years, within the framework of assistance to Ethiopia, Italy signed a new series of economic, scientific, technological, and cultural agreements, as well as those concerning medical care, personnel training, and establishing the joint cargo transportation by air, etc. In 1982, the Italian government wrote off Ethiopia's debt worth of 28 million birrs.**

**1 birr is equal to U.S. \$0.5.

The Somalian regime, however, enjoys much more diverse and generous support accounting for 20 per cent of Italy's total allocations to developing countries. In August 1981, Italy and Somalia signed a long-term cooperation agreement, providing for Italy's assistance to Somalia in developing the infrastructure, heavy industry, agriculture and fishing. From 1981 to 1983 Italy's aggregate economic and technological assistance to Somalia totalled \$205 million.

Under the July 1982 bilateral protocol Italy granted Somalia a credit of \$63 million, allegedly for "covering the balance-of-payment deficit". The Rome-based L'ESPRESSO magazine wrote in this connection that Somalia enjoys more credits from Italy than any other developing country.

Owing to the assistance of a pro-Somalian lobby entrenched in the Italian Foreign Ministry, the government and opposition parties, Mogadishu receives billions of lire in credits. This lobby justifies President M. Siad Barre's authoritarian policies on the grounds that the West is interested in severing Somalia from the Soviet sphere of influence.

This actually explains the Italian ruling circles' generosity towards Somalia, primarily in arms deliveries rather than economic assistance. Following the failure of its aggression against Ethiopia in 1978, the Somalian army was rearmed with the Italian aircraft, helicopters, armoured carriers, etc. Its officers are instructed by the Italian top military who pay regular visits to Mogadishu. Italy, however, does not mind foisting off the outdated military hardware on its ward. Thus it offered Somalia U.S. tanks, long withdrawn from service, purchased by Italy back in 1950.

The distribution pattern of state assistance graphically illustrates the interests of a specific imperialist power towards various countries and regions of developing world. In 1979-1983 Italy tripled its "development assistance" budget allocations (outstripping Western states in the period under review!) which reached \$826 million, or 0.24 per cent of its GNP. Almost 75 percent of this total goes to Africa.

In the export of private capital Italian businessmen show preference for export credits which are liable to state insurance in the majority of cases. Africa accounts for almost 60 per cent of the aggregate credits whose share in the overall exports of the Italian capital totalled from 70 to 90 per cent in the last two decades. Italian companies are both protected against losses in Africa, which is considered a "zone of heightened risk", and can borrow large funds from special state crediting institutions which promote the movement of Italian goods to African markets. Export credits are given to Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Somalia, Zaire, the Sudan, the Ivory Coast, and Tunisia.

In addition, to encourage the export of capital to Africa, the state extensively draws private firms into the Italian programmes for assistance to developing countries. The sponsors of these programmes and business circles are firmly convinced that countries enjoying Italian state assistance are obliged to enlist the services of the Italian companies in various projects.

According to the London-based FINANCIAL TIMES, Italian businessmen were quick to realise the advantages granted by the assistance programmes in the rivalry for contracts, including in Africa. In recent years, state allocations for assistance have helped Italian firms win larger markets in Africa. These include Lotti e associate (projects of artificial reservoirs for the irrigation systems in the countries of Maghreb), FIAT (deliveries of motor vehicles to Zaire, Uganda, and Tanzania), Fosveko (construction projects in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa and its suburbs), Akdatr (prospecting for rare minerals in Mozambique), etc.

Direct investment made by Italy in Africa is concentrated in the extracting, primarily oil and gas, industries. Capital investment in the extraction, refining and shipment of oil and gas guarantees Italy deliveries of energy fuels and secures much higher returns than from other industries in Africa.

The export of services in the form of construction and assembly projects is a specific and very extensive sphere of utilising Italian capital in Africa. The Italian firms have a reputation for speedy construction of the infrastructure and industrial enterprises on a contract, "turn-key" basis, and for applying advanced methods. This helps them successfully rival their other Western counterparts on the African market and bargain for major contracts.

The lion's share of the above projects is accomplished in the oil-producing countries which have sufficient financial resources and are attractive for Italy in its effort to get entrenched in the energy-rich countries. The dominane positions here are secured by ENI, the state-monopoly oil and gas association.

The above Algeria-Tunisia-Italy gas pipe-line, 2,500 kilometres long and with a designed capacity of 12.4 million cubic meters of gas annually, is the major project by SNAM-Progetti. ENI's subsidiary in Africa. Formerly, this company built oil pipe-lines in Algeria, Egypt, and Nigeria.

AGIP, another subsidiary of ENI's, which has been operating in Libya for more than a quarter century, is a major commercial contractor of Italy in the developing world. Non-economic factors, however, seriously hamper the development of economic ties between Italy and Libya.

The U.S. aggressive adventures against Libya designed to "punish" it for its anti-imperialist line have also had a bearing on relations between Libya and Italy which gives a full support to Washington's policy in the Mediterranean. Commenting on Italy's position, the Rome-based weekly DIALOGO NORDOSUD wrote: "On the one hand, the government is going to continue normal trade exchange, as the trillion-lire worth trade turnover testifies to the fact that Libya is far from being a secondary business partner of Italy. On the other hand, unwilling to irritate some of its allies, it considers it necessary to emphasise that it shares their opinion that Libya should be isolated."

NATO's decision to deploy U.S. cruise missiles in Sicily raised well-grounded apprehensions in Libya and Italy which gives a full support to sue the Italian government was given to understand by Libya that such a step would

only damage their traditional ties and aggravate the situation in the region as a whole. Indeed, subsequently phases of the relative political lull and growing economic cooperation were periodically replaced by abrupt "coolness" in bilateral relations, which was a direct outcome of Washington's pressure on Italy.

Italy's attitude towards the continent's burning issues of West Sahara and Chad also undermine its prestige among the progressive African states.

A prominent journalist F. Grimaldi wrote in the AFRICAN BUSINESS magazine: "The Italian government 'frankly' supports the OAU efforts to overcome the conflicts, specifically in the West Sahara and Chad." It would be a positive assessment if the author himself had not put the word "frankly" in inverted commas. Why did he do this?

In word, Italy favours the peaceful settlement of both conflicts by means of attaining a political understanding among all the parties concerned on the basis of the UN and OAU decisions. Indeed, the Italian right-wing forces, involved in the war business, delivered large quantities of arms to the Moroccan government which was at war with the POLISARIO Front fighting for the self-determination of the people of West Sahara, and recruited mercenaries to go to Chad. The Italian authorities turned a blind eye to this. Rome, which accused Libya of interference in Chad's internal affairs, approved of sending the French and Zairean interventionist troops and U.S. military hardware there, to support the Habre regime. All these facts challenge the sincerity of the intentions declared by the Italian government.

What is actually behind Italy's claims to the role of a "suitable partner" for Africa? Its growing state allocations for assistance bring tremendous profits to its companies in Africa. Major arms deliveries to South Africa, Somalia, and Morocco are conducive to the protracted conflicts. Finally, Italy's policies in the Mediterranean, North and Northeast Africa actually assist Washington in implementing its imperial ambitions.

Rome's African policy is underlain primarily by a desire to adapt its relations with the African countries to the needs of big business and the military-industrial complex of both Italy and its Western allies, rather than to become a "suitable partner".

Naturally, this policy does not win confidence of the continent's progressive forces. They reject NATO's plans for settling disputes in Africa and seek to secure the stable development of the continent on the basis of their own, rather than foreign "vital interests".

From these very positions these forces as well as Italy's left parties criticise the policy pursued by the Italian government which, in a bid to please the U.S., is betraying both the cause of promoting peace in Africa and the genuine national interests of the Italians.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

SOVIET-AFGHAN HISTORY OF COOPERATION, FRIENDSHIP RECOUNTED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 6, Nov-Dec 85 pp 46-49

[Article by Vladimir Ryzhov]

[Text] The many-year-long experience in economic cooperation between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan has taken shape on the basis of friendship, goodneighbourliness and mutual assistance which linked and continue to link the two countries and their peoples. Life has shown that the two states--a big one and a small one--with different levels of development can build their relations in the economy so as not to place the smaller and less developed state in a subordinate and dependent positions but, on the contrary, so that these relations be of much advantage for both partners.

The friendly ties between Soviet Russia and independent Afghanistan were forged at a time which was difficult for the two countries. Their common goal--the struggle against imperialist diktat--accelerated the emergence and consolidation of that friendship, which was initiated by Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state. The government of Soviet Russia was the first to recognise the independence and complete sovereignty of Afghanistan on March 27, 1919. This recognition and the development of Soviet-Afghan diplomatic ties put an end to Afghanistan's isolation, and promoted its successful struggle against British colonialism.

The government and people of Afghanistan highly appraised the Soviet state's support. The Afghan government came out with an initiative of concluding a Soviet-Afghan Treaty, and on February 28, 1921, the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Friendship was signed in Moscow.

The establishment of friendly relations between Soviet Russia and Afghanistan started their economic cooperation. The instruction to the Soviet Ambassador in Kabul written in 1921 with the direct participation of Lenin read in part: "Friendship presupposes mutual assistance, and proceeding from our desire to promote the development and prosperity of the friendly Afghan state as far as possible, in this peaceful arena we are ready to render it all kinds of co-operation with our power." (Documents of Soviet Foreign Policy, Volumes 1-21, Moscow, 1957-1977, Vol. 4, pp. 166-167 in Russian).

In 1921, despite the extremely hard economic condition in the young Soviet republic, which stemmed from the intervention by imperialist powers and the

Civil War, Afghanistan was given financial assistance to build the first telegraph line (Kushka-Herat-Qandahar-Kabul).

Later on, up till the beginning of World War II the Soviet Union gave assistance to its southern neighbour in building cotton refineries and other projects. At that time, the scope of assistance was not very big but what matters it was selfless. Right from the very beginning, this principle underlay economic cooperation between Soviet Russia and friendly Afghanistan, the cooperation aimed at boosting the latter's national economy and promoting its economic independence. For example, the consistency of the Leninist policy of friendship, goodneighbourliness and cooperation with Afghanistan which the Soviet state has been adhering to unswervingly for more than 60 years now, has manifested itself in the sphere of economy.

After World War II a new stage in the development of Soviet-Afghan economic ties set in. For instance, on January 27, 1954, an inter-governmental agreement on economic and technical cooperation was signed, the first postwar agreement the Soviet Union concluded with a developing country. In conformity with it the Soviet Union granted Afghanistan a \$3.5 million credit to build two elevators, a mill and a bakery in Kabul. This agreement was followed by a number of new large-scale Soviet-Afghan inter-governmental documents on economic cooperation in such major branches of Afghanistan's economy as power engineering, industry, agriculture, transport, and so on. Prior to 1978, four power stations were built with Soviet assistance, including the Naglu hydro-power station, the biggest one in the country with a capacity of 100,000 kilowatts. These power-stations produce more than 55 per cent of the country's energy. Simultaneously, the first metal-working plant was constructed in Jangalak, that is, a motor-repair works, and a house-building plant in Kabul making it possible to erect houses in Afghanistan by industrial methods on a large scale and with due account taken on seismic conditions. The Soviet Union also rendered tangible assistance in building a nitrogen fertilizer plant in Mazare-Sharif, the country's first chemical factory. After its commissioning, Afghanistan turned from an importer of carbamide to an exporter of it. Moreover, it fully provided its agriculture with this valuable mineral fertilizer.

Of great importance for Afghanistan's agriculture is the Jalalabad irrigation complex built with the Soviet Union's participation in the only area where subtropical plants can be grown. Of all the Afghan irrigation projects, it is most efficient.

The USSR has made a weighty contribution to the building of motor roads in Afghanistan. Of the 2,600 kilometres of asphalt and concrete-covered roads, 1,600 have been built with Soviet assistance, among them Kabul-Hairaton via the Salang pass and the Kushka-Herat-Qandahar highways, which are of particular importance for the national economy.

All in all, more than 70 different projects were built with Soviet assistance in Afghanistan before the April Revolution, and many of them continue to be crucial for different branches of the economy.

The solution of the problem of training national personnel for the Afghan economy is yet another form of Soviet economic assistance to that country. More than eighty thousand skilled Afghan workers and three thousand engineers and technicians have been trained with the help of Soviet teachers and specialists. Many of them were educated at the Kabul Polytechnic and the Mining and Petroleum Technical School in Mazare-Sharif, both built by the Soviet Union and presented to Afghanistan. It should be pointed out that all enterprises and projects whenever built in Afghanistan with Soviet assistance were the property of the Afghan people from the outset. This is evidence that the Soviet Union has never sought any advantages or privileges in its cooperation with Afghanistan and that the USSR's principal objective is to help that country overcome backwardness and be a developed and economically independent state with a high standard of living.

After the triumph of the April Revolution, the economic relations between the two countries entered a new, more developed stage. The establishment of the people's power in Afghanistan brought closer the interests and goals of the two nations in their cooperation and helped to expand and deepen it rapidly. The Treaty of Friendship, Goodneighbourliness and Cooperation signed between the USSR and the DRA on December 5, 1978, opened up a road towards implementing the potentialities of the development of bilateral economic cooperation, which ensued from the qualitatively new relations between the two states and peoples.

Here are some data testifying to the vigorous and fruitful way those opportunities have been used.

Out of 250 Soviet-Afghan inter-governmental documents on economic and technical cooperation, concluded after World War II, over 100 were signed following the April Revolution. During the seven post-revolutionary years, the USSR rendered Afghanistan 200 per cent more assistance (in terms of value) than during a similar period prior to the revolution.

After 1978, over 30 new economic projects were commissioned in Afghanistan with Soviet assistance in the branches, whose development promotes to the utmost the solution of the most urgent socio-economic tasks advanced by the April Revolution and aimed at radically improving the life of the Afghan people. Special among the transportation projects in the motor- and railway-bridge linking the Soviet and the Afghan banks of the Amu-Darya. Built by Soviet and Afghan workers and engineers in an unprecedentedly brief span of time, it is rightly called the bridge of friendship. Today some 60 per cent of all Soviet-Afghan freight, which has increased considerably in recent years, is transported across it. The motor-transport enterprises in Kabul that service the 1,500 Soviet KamAz trucks presented to Afghanistan by the Soviet Union and construction of trans-shipping base near Khairaton are of great importance for the development of firm internal and external economic contacts. The public sector of Afghanistan's transport system, which became greatly consolidated due to the above-mentioned measures, provides successfully for the carrying of highly important cargoes and commodities despite the counterrevolutionaries' attempts to dislocate the economy of the young republic primarily through subversive activities, the means of transportation included.

The energy problem in Afghanistan is also being solved largely due to Soviet-Afghan cooperation. Today the country's largest transmission line for the electricity produced in part by Soviet power stations is under construction in Afghanistan. One of the sections has already been commissioned. The line's designed capacity is more than one thousand million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, i.e., the amount of electric power produced now by all the power-stations in Afghanistan taken together. The capacity of the Mazare-Sharif thermal power station has been increased due to the joint efforts of the Soviet and Afghan organisations, and a factory producing ferroconcrete pylons for power transmission lines has been built in Pole-Khomri.

Cooperation between the USSR and the DRA in producing natural gas has also been successful. A new, Jarkuduk, gas field, began operating in Afghanistan more than four years ago. The DRA's outlays on its construction were repaid in less than 18 months. Today Jarkuduk, together with another gas field--Khodja-Gugerdak--also built with Soviet assistance before the April Revolution, is the most profitable economic project in Afghanistan. Deliveries of gas to the USSR account for about 40 per cent of all the country's earnings from internal sources.

The building of state-owned machine-and-tractor stations in the DRA is a new trend in Soviet-Afghan cooperation in agriculture. These stations have already been organised in five provinces, including Kabul, Balkh, Jowzjan, Baghlau and Herat.

Meeting the request of the Afghan government, the Soviet Union has delivered the necessary equipment for the irrigation repair organisations which have been set up in the country recently.

The equipment helped put many irrigation systems into operation and resume the supply of water to the fields with an area of more than 700,000 hectares.

Among the other projects built in Afghanistan with Soviet assistance in recent years there are two petroleum-product storage and distribution centers and two mills in Mazare-Sharif and Pole-Khomri, two bakeries in Kabul and Mazare-Sharif, a new polyclinic in Kabul, a kindergarten, several agronomic laboratories, a factory processing olives, and citrus fruit in the town of Jalalabad, the Lotus stationary satellite communication centre, and others.

Just as before, projects envisaged by Soviet-Afghan cooperation are largely being built on the basis of Soviet credits on easy terms.

Afghanistan needs ever bigger number of national specialists due to the growing capital construction. In conformity with the agreement between the governments of the two countries, every year hundreds of young Afghan men and women come to study in the USSR. It is the Soviet side that foots the bill. Many graduates from Soviet higher educational establishments and technical schools are working actively in different branches of the Afghan economy. National personnel are also being trained in Afghanistan. For example, some 800 specialists, among them drivers, radio-mechanics, tractor operators,

turners, builders etc., have already been trained at eight vocational schools set up with Soviet participation.

It should be pointed out that growing Soviet-Afghan cooperation in technology and economy is having a positive effect on the development of trade between the two countries, which has quadrupled in the seven years since the April Revolution. Machinery, equipment, means of transportation and spare parts to them account for about 60 per cent of all Soviet deliveries to Afghanistan. Thanks to the purchases in the USSR, the DRA satisfies completely its import needs in oil products, as well as in wheat and sugar, with a part of them being delivered gratis. Afghanistan, in turn, exports natural gas, carbamide, citrus fruits, olives, cotton fibre, wool, raw hide, nuts and raisins to the Soviet Union, which is the biggest buyer of Afghan goods.

There are but a few examples showing how Soviet-Afghan economic cooperation is developing.

However, a clear idea of its level and scope cannot be attained without mentioning the part played by the Standing Inter-Governmental Soviet-Afghan Commission on Economic Cooperation set up immediately after the triumph of the April Revolution. This commission supervises the implementation of agreements and studies the possibilities for improving the economic interaction between the two countries and enhancing its efficiency.

Summing up the overall results of Soviet-Afghan cooperation over the last few decades, it should be pointed out that, thanks to its successful development, over 100 new economic projects have been built which comprise the basis of the public sector in the Afghan economy today. Approximately a similar amount of them will be constructed or are already under construction in Afghanistan with Soviet participation.

Soviet-Afghan cooperation would no doubt have been much more effective, had it not been for the undeclared war waged by world imperialism and regional reactionaries against the young republic. Even in the difficult situation obtaining at present, however, the results of Soviet-Afghan cooperation graphically demonstrate its huge potential which is a major precondition for the further advance of the new Afghan society towards economic progress.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

ANGOLA'S TIES WITH SOVIET UNION LAUDED

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[Article by Leonid Fituni, cand. sc. (econ.)]

[Text] After Angola had won political independence, it faced the task of boosting its economy which, through the fault of its former "masters", was gravely dislocated. Even today priority is being given to this task and it has largely been solved by means of cooperation with the socialist countries, particularly with the Soviet Union. The USSR is Angola's chief economic partner.

The development of allround ties was expressed in legal terms in October 1976 by signing the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation Between the USSR and the People's Republic of Angola. The Treaty regards equality, mutual benefit and most-favoured-nation treatment as the principal bases of relations between the two countries. Particularly great importance is attached by both sides to expanding economic, technological and scientific cooperation between them, and further deepening it, as well as exchanging experience in industry, transport, agriculture, cattle-breeding, fishing, exploiting natural resources, the power engineering, communications, and training national personnel.

The signing of that fundamental document opened up broad vistas for promoting bilateral economic ties in different spheres and expanding economic, scientific and technological assistance by the Soviet Union to the young republic. As to its character, the assistance differs basically from the so-called "aid" from imperialist powers, which is an element of the policy of neocolonialism aimed at the economic enslavement of Angola.

Soviet assistance takes into account the economic policy of the Afghan government, which is striving to bolster the public sector, plan the national economy, and translate into reality the programmes for the latter's restoration and development. Soviet assistance is to be rendered for a long period of time and it is directed at forming a rational and viable economy in Angola on the basis of modern technology. This means gradual elimination of backward structures in industry and agriculture, the enhancement of labour productivity and Angola's equitable participation in international trade, on this basis.

The Soviet Union has been giving assistance to the economy of that former Portuguese colony literally since the very first difficult days of its independence. Encouraged by Western imperialists, South African aggressors backed by the military units of FNLA and UNITA tried to capture the capital, killing, plundering and destroying everything and everybody they came across. Enjoying support from the socialist states people's Angola gave a fitting rebuff to the reactionaries. In March 1976 the racist troops were driven out of its territory, while the remnants of the defeated "armies" of Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi, the ringleaders of the counter-revolution, entrenched themselves in the most remote areas. The young republic faced the task of restoring its dislocated economy.

The situation was critical indeed. Due to the hostilities agricultural production dropped sharply, and the problem of providing the population with foodstuffs was aggravated. Even the meagre harvest which it proved possible to get in some areas could not be delivered to the towns as the means of transportation had been destroyed. Iron ore was no longer extracted, the output of diamonds stopped, and oil extraction at Cabinda was brought to a halt. Under the influence of Western propaganda, hundreds of thousands of Europeans (engineers, bookkeepers, clerks, doctors, teachers) fled from Angola. The system of economic management was temporarily paralysed. Seeking finally to strangle the republic, the Western powers headed by the USA staged an economic blockade.

It was in these conditions that the Soviet Union came to the aid of Angola. The latter received assistance in organising its financial system, power industry (including the drafting of the programme for electrification), the formation of a state-owned oil company, more efficient geological prospecting, drawing up a geological map of Angola, and so on. After an all-round and profound analysis, a group of Soviet experts gave an assessment of the Angolan economy and provided corresponding recommendations for reviving and developing it.

As time passed, cooperation between the two states expanded and its forms improved. At present, it embraces practically all spheres of life.

Agriculture is one of the major spheres. There is a number of reasons for concentration on this branch of production. First, Angola is predominantly an agrarian country. Second, its government regards agriculture as the basis for a general economic progress. Third, an accelerated upsurge in agriculture is indispensable for solving the food problem. Finally, the growth of exports of agricultural produce may considerably increase hard currency earnings.

Soviet assistance in agriculture includes planning, helping to create co-operatives, restoring the plantations of most important commercial and food crops, which were abandoned or suffered in the course of hostilities, mechanising agriculture, and training skilled national personnel.

Here are a few facts. Soviet specialists helped to elaborate a programme for expanding and mechanising cotton and wheat production in the People's Republic of Angola. In May 1978 an agreement was signed which envisaged Soviet Assistance free of charge in creating an experimental farmstead to

grow wheat in Huila Province. The Angolans were given the necessary machinery, equipment, trucks, fertilizer, seeds, pesticides and herbicides. A group of Soviet specialists was sent to Angola. There are many such examples.

Cooperation in fishing aimed primarily at forming a modern fishing fleet in Angola, training national cadres and rebuilding factories for processing sea products is highly effective. Within a short span of time this industry was radically reconstructed with assistance from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

Within the framework of the intergovernmental agreement a Soviet-Angolan Mixed Commission was set up, which, at its first session held in Moscow in March 1977, took a decision to form a special mixed Angolan-Soviet society to improve the fishing economy of the young republic.

Today over half of Angola's requirements in fish products is satisfied by the deliveries from the mixed Soviet-Angolan fishing expedition set up in 1979. It consists of about 50 Angolan and Soviet seiners. A ship repair yard has already been operating for five years in the port of Luanda where dozens of trawlers are repaired every year (the yard was built by the USSR). A similar ship repair yard functions in Lobito. Angola was given several ships which served as the basis for setting up the first Angolan fishing cooperative. By the early 1985 more than 350 specialists had been trained at a navigation school build and equipped with Soviet assistance. About 700 Angolan fishermen did probation on Soviet trawlers. Fifty Angolans are studying at Soviet higher and secondary educational establishments training experts in fishing. Over 500,000 tons of fish have been delivered to Angola throughout the period of the bilateral cooperation. Soviet specialists have joined those from the Institute of Fishing Research of the People's Republic of Angola, in a concerted effort to determine its fish reserves, protect and use them rationally.

The Soviet Union has been rendering the PRA great help in restoring industry. For the latter to function normally, it is imperative to solve a number of tasks, in particular to commission the destroyed industrial projects, build new ones and train skilled workers and engineers; the cooperation between the two countries is aimed at carrying out those objectives.

Angolans remember how Soviet specialists worked when reconstructing the shipyards in the town of Lobito, reequipping the ship engineering factories in the town of Benguela. A modern aviation complex providing all types of technical service of the aircraft has been build at Launda airport with Soviet assistance. A tripartite agreement among Angola, the Soviet Union and Brazil on the building of the Capanda hydro-power station in Malanje Province was signed at the end of 1984. When built, this major project will double the republic's energy capacity, ensure the irrigation of vast areas of farmland and improve navigation on the Cuanza River.

The Soviet Union also assists Angola in restoring the infrastructure, in particular the bridges destroyed as a result of hostilities and subversive

activities by the enemies of the Angolan revolution. Moreover, the work is done in an extremely short span of time. Such was the case, for example, when South African terrorists blew up the 220-metre long railroad bridge across the river Giraul. They hoped to put an important road out of action, which connects the port of Namibe with southern Angolan provinces of Huila, Kunene and Cuando-Cubango for a long time. The Soviet bridge builders, and Angolan workers repaired the bridge in just 18 days.

Soviet assistance in training personnel is given mainly on the basis of intergovernmental agreements and plans for scientific and cultural cooperation. First and foremost, people are trained in the specialities needed most by Angola's national economy. The standard and methods of teaching ensure high skills in conformity with modern requirements.

The USSR trains different Angolan specialists right on the spot such as oil industry workers, miners, drivers, motor-mechanics, electricians, machine-operators for agriculture, mechanics for repairing and servicing fishing boats, and so on. Soviet organisations sent to Angola the necessary teaching aids, equipment for shops and laboratories.

With Soviet assistance the Angolans are mastering the necessary professions both at special educational establishments and right on the job. The method of mass training of national cadres at the Soviet-Angolan cooperation projects has been successfully applied. This is particularly valuable in the view of the young republic's meagre financial resources and the need to provide its national economy with a great number of skilled workers in a brief span of time. The setting up of a ramified system of training on the job, which requires no big outlays, is advantageous and promising. In conformity with the protocols on cultural cooperation, the Soviet Union is making its higher and secondary schools available to Angolans. In 1984, 750 young Angolans were studying in the Soviet Union. All in all, about 8,000 skilled specialists have been trained with Soviet assistance, and 2,000 Angolans are mastering different trades in Lobito, Lubango, Huambo and Malanje, tutored by Soviet teachers.

The contacts between the two countries in medicine are developing successfully. Last year a Soviet-Angolan agreement was signed in Luanda for the purpose of further deepening and expanding cooperation in training national medical personnel of the PRA, and increasing the number of Soviet doctors working in both medicinal and therapeutic institutions in Angola. The agreement also envisages Soviet assistance in building a number of medical projects. At present, more than 150 Soviet medical workers are in the People's Republic of Angola. In the years of independence 2.5 million of Angolans have received medical assistance from Soviet medical personnel.

The scope of trade between the two countries has grown considerably in the years of Angola's independence. In 1976, the total trade turnover amounted to only 19.7 million rubles, while in 1984 it had reached 147.8 million rubles, thus increasing almost eight-fold.

The first trade agreement between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of Angola signed in 1976 promoted the growth of trade. In conformity with

the latter, the two contracting parties undertook to expand the exchange on the basis of the most-favoured-nation treatment, the granting of licences for the commodities which will be the subject of trade. The agreement also provides for the procedure of accounting between the partners: the deliveries are carried out in accordance with the world market prices, and the payment, as a rule, is made in hard currency with due account taken of the legislation in each country.

At the initial stages of cooperation (1976-1977) Angola mainly imported food, necessities, and means of transportation. Such a structure met the needs of the republic at that time. Soviet deliveries provided the inhabitants of the towns with foodstuffs, soap and textiles, while the means of transportation were of great significance in restoring the national economy and resuming normal economic exchange between town and countryside.

Since 1978 the structure of imports has been undergoing some changes. The purchases of machinery and industrial equipment, as well as of some types of raw materials and semi-finished goods indispensable for the normal functioning of the economy (tools, different types of farming machinery, tractors, fertilizer, refrigerators, and so on) have gradually been growing. In that period the industrial goods imported by Angola from the USSR accounted for about 75 per cent of its total imports.

Their deliveries became an important factor in the process of reproduction which was gathering momentum in Angola, of economic accumulation in its natural form (the building of factories, equipping them with machinery, etc.) because Angola mainly purchased the machinery that it still does not produce.

At present, the structure of trade is continuing to improve. Its evolution mirrors the desire of the two countries to make the exchange maximally meeting the present-day demands and economic interests. Today, among other things, the Soviet Union sells to Angola river- and sea-going vessels, ship equipment, aircraft, spare parts, and canned milk.

The present structure of Angolan exports does in general reflect the current level of development in the national economy, which is suffering from the tremendous damage caused by the aggressive acts of South Africa and the subversive activities by the UNITA gangs supported by Pretoria. As the economic situation in Angola improves, the structure may become more diversified, and this will undoubtedly enhance the efficiency and mutual benefit of trade.

Commercial contacts between the two states are not reduced to trade relations. As Angola marches along the road of independence, the economic, scientific and technological assistance rendered by the Soviet Union to the young republic is gaining in importance.

In May 1985, the town of Lubango played host to the Fourth Session of the Mixed Soviet-Angolan Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation and Trade. It adopted decisions on building the first Angolan power grid with Soviet assistance, creating a large-scale fishing complex in Benguela and constructing three big hospitals--in Lubango, Luanda, and

Malanje. One more step has been taken towards further developing and deepening equitable economic ties between the two countries which serve the interests of the Soviet and Angolan peoples, playing an increasingly tangible part in the creative activities of the working people of the Soviet Union and Angola.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

ALLEGED REBIRTH OF JAPANESE MILITARISM ASSAILED

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 6, Nov-Dec 85 pp 70-74

[Article by Stanislav Modenov, cand. sc. (hist.)]

[Text] The Japanese economy boasted an impressive performance in 1984: the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 5.5 per cent as compared with the previous year, while the output by Japanese industrial enterprises has been reported by the press to have gone up 11.2 per cent. The Japanese Iron-and-Steel Federation announced that in 1984 the output of non-refined steel in the country increased by 8.6 per cent as compared with the previous year and amounted to 105.58 million metric tons, exceeding the 100-million mark for the first time in the past three years. Last year, Japan produced a record number of cars--11,464,920 and retained world leadership in this field. The manufacture of video tape recorders went up by 29.4 per cent over the 1983 figure.

But all this does not give rise to any optimism among the broad sections of the working people because they paid the highest price for this growth in output; Japan's wage and salary earners were hit hardest by the growing cost of living, the concrete results of the government's relentless policy of further curtailing spending on social needs. Besides, 1985 saw signs of declining rates of industrial production. According to official obviously downgraded statistics, there were more than 1.5 totally unemployed in Japan at the beginning of this year. But the army of the redundant" continues to swell. There have been mass dismissals in metallurgy. Besides, more and more people in the shipbuilding and textile industry are losing their jobs, the same being true of transport workers. Taxes weigh down heavily on millions of rank-and-file families, but the government has no intention of reducing them. What is more, taxes are continuing to grow this year.

But the present Japanese Cabinet's foreign policy is causing the greatest concern in the country. Facts show that relations between Japan and the United States are entering a new stage. On the one hand, they feature rather acute forms of inter-imperialist clashes, especially in the economic field. But, at the same time, one cannot fail to notice their increasing rapprochement, the coordination of their policies along all lines, above all in the military field. What is more, all this is taking place against the background of the drastically increased aggressiveness of Washington's course in the world arena. Washington is known to have proclaimed a "crusade" against communism

and it set course aimed at preparations for nuclear war, and at an unrestricted arms race and spreading it to outer space.

President Ronald Reagan of the United States and Premier Yasuhiro Nakasone of Japan, as well as other top-ranking representatives of the two countries do not miss any opportunities to note the "special partnership" between them, their shared aims in foreign policy and tasks in the military sphere. In their all-out effort to follow in the wake of the policy pursued by the United States the Japanese ruling circles hope to achieve a certain easing of trade and economic contradictions by way of concessions to Washington in the political and military fields. On the other hand, they believe that this may be the most effective way of safeguarding the class interests of Japan's financial oligarchy that emphatically rejects the policy of neutrality and views its country's might as an inseparable component of the entire imperialist system in the historic confrontation with the world of socialism.

The forming of the political climate in Japan is now being keynoted by the mounting struggle between the ruling circles, on the one hand, and the progressive forces and the democratic public, on the other, over questions of the government's military policy and the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party's plans to revise the peaceful clauses in the constitution and carry out administrative and financial reforms and also reforms in education with the ultimate aim of restricting the functions of local bodies of government and intensifying reactionary trends in the school system. The struggle over these issues is not only being waged in parliament.

The government's course is being subjected to scathing criticism at big meetings and demonstrations, in the democratic press and even in the major bourgeois newspapers. A public opinion poll conducted by the newspaper ASAHI late in March 1985 revealed the attitude of the public at large to the present Cabinet's military policy. About 60 per cent of the respondents said they were alarmed by the Nakasone government's "defence policy". It is common knowledge that this government does not stint money on increasing direct and indirect taxes, renouncing the declared three "non-nuclear principles" and becoming more deeply involved in Washington's aggressive policy. This and many other polls reveal the growing awareness among the Japanese public generally of the need for the Conservative government to change its priorities in its policy. In the opinion of most Japanese, the country should not enhance its prestige by the dangerous buildup of militaristic muscles or the obedient toeing of Washington's line of whipping up tension and increasing confrontation with the Soviet Union but by vigorous efforts to ensure Japan's genuine contribution to improving the international situation in Asia and throughout the world.

The guidelines of the 45th Congress of the Liberal-Democratic Party, held in January 1985, show that Japan's ruling circles further intend to view the world through the eyes of the United States. They state that, by relying on its economic might, Japan will play an ever more active role in world politics. But its attitude to events in the world will be determined by its close alliance with the United States, the document stresses.

When speaking at the special commission on security in the House of Representatives Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe described Japan's foreign policy as "creative diplomacy". He noted that the country's policy in safeguarding security relied on three important principles--the promotion of peace, the smooth and effective implementation of the Japanese-American "security treaty" and the improvement of Japan's minimum defence potential.

Japan's understanding of how peace should be promoted is illustrated by its attitude to a number of major constructive initiatives aimed at strengthening peace, detente and disarmament, at creating a climate of trust in relations among the various states, which were studied at the United Nations in recent years. Thus, Japan jointly with the United States, resisted the implementation of the proposal made by the Soviet Union in 1978 and adopted by the UN General Assembly to draft and conclude a convention on strengthening the security guarantees of the non-nuclear states, and also showed a negative attitude to the resolution on the non-deployment of nuclear arms on the territory of the states where there are no such arms at present. Together with the United States and its NATO allies Japan was among the new states that voted in the United Nations against the adoption of Declaration on the Prevention of a Nuclear Catastrophe that condemns the first-use of nuclear arms as the gravest crime against mankind; against a resolution urging the speediest commencement of talks with the aim of concluding a convention prohibiting production, stockpiling, deployment and the use of neutron weapons and a number of other resolutions aimed at lessening the danger of a new world war.

At the same time, Tokyo was one of the first to approve the deployment of American medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, supported Washington's plans to spread the arms race to outer space and stated its readiness to cooperate with the Americans in accomplishing this. In a commentary on March 10 concerning the Japanese government's attitude to the "star wars" programme, the newspaper ASAHI wrote that Premier Nakasone had lately increasingly gravitated from an "understanding" to open support for the U.S. position. "We are concerned," the paper wrote editorially, "that the Premier is displaying readiness to support the 'star wars' programme with concrete measures, including the supply of Japanese technology to the United States for these purposes." Here reference is being made to the American administration's desire to gain access to Japanese developments in optical electronics and the transmission of large volumes of data in the millimetre band that are to form the backbone of the "nervous system" of the future network of American military spacecraft in orbit. The Japanese press conjectures that Tokyo will also hardly reject Washington's intention of making Japan shoulder a part of the financial burden to create costly space armaments.

The growing intensity of Tokyo's activities, which together with Washington intends to create a new political structure in the Pacific basin suiting the strategic ambitions of the United States and Japan's economic plans, is causing ever greater apprehension in countries of the Asian-Pacific region. As designed by the ruling circles of the two imperialist powers, this structure should also block the mounting movement of the region's peoples in support of demands to make it a nuclear-free zone. The American administration and the Japanese government are trying in every way to obscure the political and military nature of the "Pacific Community" planned by them by bringing to the

fore cooperation trends that are more attractive for developing countries, but, in spite of all this, Washington's and Tokyo's idea has got a cool reception in the countries of the region because their ruling circles are increasingly realising the dependent role that is being prepared for the Pacific countries by the "brain trusts" in Washington and Tokyo.

Of late, Japan has noticeably stepped up its military and political ties with the Western European NATO countries, especially with those of them where the new American nuclear missiles are being deployed. Judging by press reports, Tokyo is now pressing for the status of a "permanent observer" at the headquarters of the North Atlantic bloc. All this has the full approval of Washington, which wants to create an all-embracing strategic structure of the West in which Japan is to serve as the Far Eastern flank. The Japanese Foreign Ministry has already arranged the holding of consultations on military-economic questions with the FRG, Britain, Italy and France. A mechanism of exchanging information on the situation in all the more important parts of the world has been set up between Japan and the NATO countries, a government spokesman stated in parliament.

Realising that for a number of reasons of a domestic nature (constitutional restrictions, the resistance of the opposition parties, the progressive forces, the peaceloving public, etc.) the Japanese government cannot build up the country's militaristic potential and increase military expenditures as rapidly as Washington would like the American administration is pressing for an increase in Japan's contribution to the aid provided to Washington's allies. Here, too, Tokyo readily responds to the wishes of its senior partner. It is not deterred by the realisation that new financial inputs are primarily intended to assist pro-American reactionary regimes, to strengthen their repressive machine and build up their military potential, and that, in the long run, this will still further destabilise the situation in the planet's explosive areas. At the same time, on Washington's prompting, Tokyo is restricting aid to those countries whose governments refuse to follow in the wake of American imperialism's aggressive course. For instance, recently Japan decided to drastically curtail the programme of aid to the population of Ethiopia that is suffering from drought. This step was unhesitatingly assessed by the progressive Japanese public as an attempt by Tokyo jointly with Washington to impede the progressive transformations being carried out by the Ethiopian government.

Shintaro Abe referred to the "improvement in Japan's minimum defence potential" as one of the most important tasks designed to safeguard the country's security. What is this potential at present and why does it need to be "improved"?

Today Japan already ranks fourth among the allies of the United States in terms of tonnage of the Navy, regarded in the West as one of the most modern and combat efficient, fifth in terms of submarines and sixth in terms of the size of the air force. The Japanese armed forces, which now number 245,000 officers and men, are roughly equal in size to those of Britain. The ground forces consist of 13 divisions with 1,000 tanks, 500 self-propelled assault guns, 600 armoured cars, almost 4,000 artillery pieces and mortars. As estimated by Western experts, the Japanese "self-defence force" ranks sixth among the armies of the leading capitalist states and, as noted by the

newspaper YOMIURI, is becoming one of the strongest armies in Asia. It is noteworthy that the volume of Japan's arms production has doubled since 1979 and is continuing to grow twice as fast as in the West European countries.

But the level of militaristic potential attained no longer suits the growing ambitions of Japan's ruling circles and the owners of the biggest monopoly associations who are closely linked with arms production. This is patently illustrated by the steady increase in the National Defence Agency's budget. In the 1985 fiscal year (beginning on April 1 this year) Japan's military spending will exceed last year's level by 6.9 per cent and amount to a sum without precedent in the country's postwar history--3.14 trillion yen (\$12,55 billion). On a bid to lull the Japanese public, it is openly stated in government and military circles that this time as well allocations for the needs of the armed forces will not exceed the ceiling of one per cent of the Gross National Product, as required by the government's decisions. But how big is the clearance left? A simple calculation shows that it amounts to a mere 0.003 of a per cent.

Such growth rates in the NDA's budget prompt many Japanese researchers to make grim forecasts. Professor Tomiyama of Kanto Gakuin University, for instance, has estimated that in terms of absolute military spending Japan might already reach one of the top places in the world by the end of the present decade.

Washington's desire to turn the Northwest part of the Pacific into its front-line strategic outpost spearheaded against the Soviet Union is becoming ever more obvious. A key role is given to Japan in these schemes. The U.S. administration is even prepared to smooth out somewhat the American-Japanese economic contradictions in exchange for Tokyo's consent to make a more impressive contribution to military-political cooperation between the two countries. Here, too, the Japanese authorities are eager to accommodate their ally across the ocean.

"Japan is rapidly becoming a bridgehead of Washington's global strategy," the newspaper AKAHATA wrote in November 1984. Japan has yielded to the United States and assumed the obligation "to protect" the sea lanes at a distance of a thousand nautical miles from its shores and to blockade international straits in case of "emergency". The navy and the anti-submarine aviation are being hastily built up in order to fulfill these obligations. The latest missiles are being designed and whole batteries of them will be aimed at the straits. The stationing of American F-16 fighter-bombers capable of reaching Soviet territory with a load of nuclear arms has been started at the Misawa, air base with Tokyo's consent.

American aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines with nuclear arms on board are calling at Japanese ports more and more frequently and for longer periods of time. Joint exercises of an offensive nature by the armed forces of the two countries are being conducted on an expanded scale. Tokyo pretends that it supposedly has no knowledge of the deployment of nuclear weapons and toxic substances at a number of American military bases on Japanese territory. In January 1983, the Nakasone government formally agreed to handing over Japanese military technology to the United States and in November

of the same year concluded an inter-governmental agreement determining the procedure regarding the technology transfer, and providing for the creation of a special bilateral commission for these purposes. The list of Japanese developments of particular interest to the Pentagon includes information on semiconductors from gallium arsenide, communications equipment based on fibre optics, super-large integrated circuits, the technology of producing a new type of ceramics, heat-resistant materials, laser technology, etc. The consent of the Japanese authorities to hand over advanced military technology to the United States can only be assessed as yet another testimony of the serious swing in Japan's policy towards giving practical support to Washington's course of starting a new spiral of the arms race.

Japan's rapid remilitarisation is being accompanied by a massive propaganda campaign organised by the Liberal Democratic Party and the government with the aim of "substantiating" the buildup of military muscles by the existence of a "Soviet military threat", to convince the country's public that Tokyo's territorial claims to a number of islands of the South Kuril chain belonging to the Soviet Union are "legitimate". Giving a fresh impetus to this campaign, the head of the Japanese Cabinet stated again in his policymaking speech at the 102nd Session of Parliament in January of this year that Japan would stubbornly continue to work to solve the so-called "northern territories" problem and stressed the government's intention of pressing for "a general review of all the postwar results". Moreover, he again mentioned the "growing Soviet military threat".

Such actions by the Japanese ruling circles do not contribute anything to improving the international situation in Asia, to creating a climate of good-neighborliness and trust in relations between Japan and the USSR, the present state of which can hardly be described as satisfactory owing to Tokyo's policy. Although the Japanese leadership has recently been making statements about its desire to set right its relations with the Soviet Union, there is, unfortunately, no confirmation of this in practice.

As to the USSR, it has invariably come out and continues to come for relations between our countries to be friendly, profound and multifaceted. The constructive Soviet proposals that have been presented to the Japanese side are directed precisely at the attainment of these aims. These include proposals to conclude a treaty on goodneighbourliness and mutually advantageous cooperation, to reach an agreement under which the USSR would guarantee non-use of nuclear arms against Japan, while the Japanese side would undertake to strictly observe its non-nuclear status. But all these proposals are yet to evoke a response from the Japanese government.

Japan is faced with a multitude of different problems at home and abroad, some of them very complex ones; for instance, those connected with a field of vital importance to the country--foreign trade. Facts show, however, that the minds of the Japanese leaders are increasingly becoming occupied with the military theme and especially those aspects of it that concern Japan's involvement in the aggressive strategy of the United States and NATO. The militaristic accent in Japan's policy cannot but alarm the neighbouring states, cannot but cause apprehension among the peaceloving public in the Asian countries. It also contradicts the national interests of the Japanese

people, which is resolutely coming out against the threat of a nuclear war, for the pursuance by Japan of a genuinely independent foreign policy.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

REFERENCE BOOK ON ASIAN COUNTRIES REVIEWED

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[Book review by I. Khristov]

[Text] Asia: Politics and Economics (Reference Book), Ed.-in-Chief S. Savov, Sofia, 1984, 600 pp. (in Bulgarian).

This book was prepared for publication by a team of scholars from the Institute of International Relations and Socialist Integration (Bulgaria), jointly with Soviet authors, with Professor Stoyadin Savov acting as Editor-in-Chief. The topicality of the monograph can easily be explained by the important part played by the Asian countries in world politics today.

The reference book is divided into a general part and one dealing with individual countries.

Several articles acquaint the reader with the nature, resources and the formation of the contemporary political map of Asia; with each country's place in the world economy and international relations, with their socio-political differentiation.

The fact that the book contains an article on demographic problems is absolutely logical, as Asia is inhabited by more than half of the world's population and the most densely-populated countries are situated there, too. The solution of demographic problems in this region is of major importance for the whole of mankind, let alone the Asian continent.

When describing the historic events determining the contemporary political map in Asia, the authors rightly note the influence which the Great October Socialist Revolution has exerted on it. The anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of Asia was given a fresh impetus as a result of the Second World War, when some of these countries embarked on the path of socialist construction.

The movement of non-alignment, in which the majority of the Asian countries are taking part today, has gained great prestige. The imperialist forces, however, have not reconciled themselves to the changes occurring in the world, for which reason they bend over backwards to restore their positions in Asia (U.S. aggression in Vietnam, the Middle East crisis, etc., are the cases in point). Today Asia remains the arena of acute confrontation

between the forces of progress and reaction, resulting in a complicated situation on that continent.

The article on the contemporary state of the productive forces in Asia brings to light the most acute problems facing these countries' economies, i.e., the problems of food, energy, manpower resources, and others. The authors arrive at the conclusion that, in future, these countries should introduce cardinal changes into their industrialisation models, as their development would be seriously affected by external factors such as structural changes in the industries of the developed capitalist states (p 72).

While considering the social, class, and political structures of the Asian countries, the authors justly emphasise the part played by such factors as well-established traditions, the great influence exercised by religion, the processes of national and ethnic consolidation which are in the making.

International security in Asia is given due attention by the authors. The fact that highly dangerous hotbeds of tension still exist on the continent impart topicality to these problems. The authors underscore the importance of the Soviet peace initiatives envisaging, among other things, the creation of the collective security system in Asia, a just Middle East settlement, the Indian Ocean becoming a zone of peace, etc. They also note the important part played by the non-alignment movement in the promotion of international security.

Undoubtedly, the inclusion of a chapter dealing with Bulgaria's political, economic, and cultural ties with the Asian countries is very appropriate; its material is a testimony to the fact that this small socialist country is successfully developing multifarious ties with Asian countries, proceeding in its relations with them from the firm and constant principles of equality, respect for sovereignty, non-interference in other countries' home affairs, mutual benefit and assistance.

The reference book can be useful to anyone who is interested in or studying the Asian countries.

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THIRD WORLD ISSUES

REVIEW OF LAOTIAN REPUBLIC'S DEVELOPMENT, PROGRESS

Moscow ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY in English No 6, Nov-Dec 85 pp 53-56

[Article by Alexei Yerovchenkov]

[Text] For the Lao People's Democratic Republic the current year is a significant one as it marks the 10th year of the republic and 30th anniversary since the formation of the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos--the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the Lao people who have courageously upheld their freedom and independence in militant struggle. In 1975 under the guidance of the PRPL national-democratic revolution was completed and the country embarked on the programme of building the foundations of a socialist society, by-passing the capitalist stage of development. Once a small group of communists devoted to their revolutionary cause, the party now has grown into an organisation with a membership of 40 thousand, an organisation that has won over the hearts and minds of the whole nation. Addressing the Third Congress of the Party in April 1982 the General Secretary of the PRPL's Central Committee Kaysone Phomvihanne, who has invariably been the party's leader since it was founded in 1955, said that under the leadership of the PRPL Laotians had traversed a difficult path and had won a remarkable victory. Having completed an almost two century-long struggle against foreign feudal lords, he said, the French colonialists and the American aggressors, above all, the Laotians have secured for themselves the position of full-fledged masters of their country, translating into reality their long-cherished dream of peace, independence, national concord and state unity.

The Unforgettable Past

The days when the congress was held are still fresh in my memory. The atmosphere was that of a national holiday. Vientiane--this ancient capital of the "country of one million elephants", as Laos is traditionally referred to, grew young once again. Red flags could be seen everywhere. Buildings, decorated with tender champa flowers, which are the symbol of love, friendship and purity of the soul, glistened white. The imposing monument to the unknown soldier [words indistinct] was a tribute to the greatness of the exploit performed by the Laotian patriots who had given up their lives for their country's better future. The monument was designed by Amphonari Keola, a woman who had gone through all the trials of the people's war against the American aggressors in the legendary Plain of Jars in the

country's north. She studied the art of sculpture and architecture at the Institute of Architecture in Moscow.

"How did the idea of this monument occur to me?" she repeated my question in a low voice, touching the stone petals of the lotus flowers that gird the monument shaped in the form of a four-faced Buddhist stele. Built in the best national traditions it stands close to the shrine of the Laotians--a gilded, almost 50-metre high, That Lounge stele built by craftsmen more than four centuries ago. "I think, the idea of the future monument occurred to me in Moscow, when I stood near the Kremlin wall and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with its eternal flame. I was trying to convey, laconically and expressively at the same time, the feeling of deep gratitude to the heroes who had broken the backbone of the reactionary forces. We are grateful to the Laotian fathers, brothers and sisters who have fought to see our country free from exploitation and also to the Soviet people who made a decisive contribution to the historic victory over German fascism and Japanese militarism."

Many delegates to the Third Congress of the PRPL wore orders and medals marking their military valour besides peace-time decorations. They were sent to the party's highest forum by state and cooperative farms, construction projects, the country's northern regions where the grim aftermath of the war is still very much felt. I was struck by what I saw in Xieng Khouang and Sam-Neua provinces. A group of Soviet journalists arrived at the former battle area in passenger biplane. When the plane landed some 200 kilometres north of Vientiane a terrifying picture opened before our eyes: the land was pock-marked by bomb craters. Almost every rice paddy had been punched by American shells. [Words indistinct] in some bomb craters filled with water. In one of the villages we often saw pellet bomb containers which peasants now use for growing vegetables or feeding pigeons. Here and there we came across the frames of pagodas or buildings destroyed during the raids of "flying fortresses"--B-52 bombers. The whole world knows today that American bandit pilots made more than 400 air raids every day. In Xieng Khouang alone they destroyed over 20 thousand homes, 200 schools and 50 hospitals. The toll of human lives is impossible to estimate. It's too hard and painful to list the crimes committed by the imperialists, for there are too many of them.

Our plane a smooth landing in a mountain valley close to the town of Vieng Sai, which means "victory town" in English. A large crowd of children gathered around the grassy runway. They were looking shyly at our small passenger plane. There was nothing surprising about their behaviour. Our Laotian friend told us that in the 30 years of the hard liberation struggle people had acquired a habit of looking for some hiding place the moment the sounds of an aeroplane reached them. It's only recently that the skies over the courageous Lao people have become peaceful once again. But the horrors of war are still remembered well, even by children. For the Laotians Vieng Sai is what Leningrad is for the Soviet people--the cradle of the revolution. The town lies amidst rocky mountains, which protrude like teeth of a huge animal. Guerillas, unbelievably, some one and a half million of them, lived and fought there, hiding themselves in the impregnable caves. The headquarters of the People's Liberation Army of Laos and of all the country's patriotic forces were located there. From there the patriots were sent down

the forest paths on military missions. The republic's peaceful future took its beginning in the Vieng Sai mountains: people were learning how to read and write there were weaving fabrics, rehearsing performances, giving birth to children and stewing their favorite glutinous rice--Laotian bread in bamboo baskets. Walking under the dark vaults of the caves makes you feel ill at ease. Your steps resound in this darkness and dampness. 'You come across [word indistinct] lamps, plank beds, bamboo tables and other modest household utensils. The grottos where the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the PRPL Kaysone Phomvihane, and the current President of the republic, Souphanouvong, worked are marked by wartime austerity. On the stones that were used as desks there are maps and volumes with Lenin's works.

The Republic on the March

For 10 years Laos has been building a new life but it still has to expand a lot of effort on restoring the national economy, on building the foundations for agriculture--the country's leading branch--and on developing industry which started rising only under the people's government.

The Latsang state farm with its multi-branch economy, set up with the Soviet Union's help near the Plain of Jars, is well-known all over Laos. This modern highly mechanised farm has literally risen from ashes. The cultivation of the land started there not from land reclamation measures but from mine clearing. Thousands of mines which threatened with death people engaged in the extremely peaceful job of tilling the land were defused. In a short while those lands were turned into paddies for upland rice. Incidentally, for five years in a row the country has been reaping a record harvest of this staple crop--more than one million tons. This has been accomplished thanks to the development of irrigation and to the good initiative, which all the cooperative farms have taken up, that of growing two rice crops per year. Along with rice growing the Latsang state farm specialises in live-stock breeding which receives much attention. Workers on the state farm take pride in the fact that they were the ones to train the first skilled farm machinery operators for other regions in the country, including the first women-tractor drivers. We were told that by the state farm's director, Soumthit Ounthong, a graduate of the Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University in Moscow. The importance of the Latsang farm for the country is hard to overestimate, he said. When it appeared, our region changed beyond recognition. The farm has provided the local people with work, and with the necessary food. People have acquired a confidence in their abilities. The farm is gradually expanding and has now become an example that other enterprises are following. The PRPL has set its sights on the further promotion of cooperative farming in Agriculture. By now almost half of all the peasant families are working together at more than two thousand state and cooperative farms. Today cooperative farms are making a decisive contribution to fulfilling the targets of the agricultural programme during the final year of the five-year economic plan.

While the central province of Vientiane and the southern province of Champasak, the country's food basket, have already switched over fully to cooperative farming, the latter is only just being promoted in the

inaccessible regions of Northern Laos. The greater part of the population living there belongs to the Lao-Soung ethnic group. The way of life of the many nationalities in this group, particularly the Mongi, better known as the Miao, is very original. They are the world's only mountain nomads who travel in the mountains from season to season and grow upland rice on the high slopes. They prepare the land for rice fields by burning down and rooting out forests, thus doing a lot of damage to the environment. The Laotian government has decided to give the Mongi every possible assistance so that they can settle down eventually on the land of the fertile plains specially allotted to them. The Mongi have rather quickly responded to these measures by the government.

Under the people's government the Lao Soung people have begun to live a new life. They now have a written language of their own. They are learning how to read and write. New words and concepts have appeared in their vocabularies such as doctor, book, radio, cinema, newspaper or automobile. The Soviet journalists therefore were very interested in visiting the places where the Mongi, these "rulers of the mountains", live, but this was not so easy to do.

At first we covered some one hundred kilometres by car along the terrain lacking any roads. Then we climbed for a long time up the narrow mountain paths blocked by reeds and stones. And finally we reached fields covered with the bright-green shoots of upland rice. Boys dressed in black shirts and pants, traditional for the Mongi, for they match up with the austere morals of the mountain people, were the first to notice us. We passed by the groves of coconut palms, banana plantations, and corn fields. They are all major crops of that part of the country. The news of our arrival quickly reached the elder of the village of Ban San Mai and we were taken to the main office of the local cooperative farm. We were served the tart liana drink and opened coconuts. The conversation got going.

"Residents of our local villages," the chairman of the farm, comrade Li Tiao, told us, "had long been watching the life of their neighbours on the plains down below, in the foothills where these people worked on the land together. Then the leaders of local tribes got together and decided that it was time to catch up with them and take advantage of the benefits offered by a new life. Over 80 families agreed to join their efforts and plough the land together for the first time. On that land handed over to them by the government gratis some five tons of upland rice were sown. Then, the farm chairman went on, we built a dam and began planting lowland rice, a much higher-yielding variety of rice, for the first time in our history. The administrative committee of Xieng Khouang province supplied us with seeds, agricultural implements and gave us advice. We still have quite a few unsolved problems. For example, there is a shortage of buffaloes. Homes of the villagers are separated from one another by long distances. And this interferes with our work," the chairman said.

The conversation went on. We could see that the members of the Mongi cooperative were eager to be rid of the archaic and non-productive way of life which had once suited only the colonialists and the feudal lords. The first three primary schools have appeared in Ban San Mai, and literacy courses are run for adults. Several young people have left the village for

the capital to continue their studies there. We were told that there are no more people in this village, as in the whole of Xieng Khouang province, who do not know how to read and write. Illiteracy has been stamped out in all the country's other provinces.

One of the most remarkable gains of the people's government is the fraternal unity of all the three major ethnic groups in Laos: the Lao Soungs, the Lao-Lums (the most numerous group) that has been living on the plains since the olden days and the Lao-Theungs who live on the plateau. A total number of seventy tribes and ethnic groups live in the republic. Their representatives can be seen everywhere today--on construction projects, in colleges, in the People's Army of Laos. And, finally, at all kinds of festivals where people from all parts of the country dressed in their unique national costumes can be seen in a single national round dance, the lamvong. To unite all the nationalities and national minorities into one family, realise the principle of full equality, promote mutual trust, provide help and support to one another in the building of the foundations of socialism, bring the development of backward tribes up to the level of the more advanced ones, combat attempts of enemies to fan differences among the nationalities and inculcate a nationalist ideology--these are the main trends in the nationalities policy pursued by the PRP. This policy has secured apparent gains.

Side by Side With Friends

Before the 1975 revolution there were actually no roads in Laos. To [words indistinct] being given to developing the road-transport infrastructure. Trunk highways are being built to link the southern and northern provinces and establish road communications with Vietnam and get an outlet to the sea. The member-countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Soviet Union among others, are helping their Laotian friends to solve this complicated problem.

Of special importance is spanning the country's numerous rivers with bridges. A big bridge across the Nam Ngum river, on the approaches to the capital, has been opened recently. The uninterrupted hauling of freight to the southern rice growing regions will no longer be dependent on the monsoon season and ferrying. Speaking on the ceremony which opened the bridge to traffic the Laotian Minister of Transport and Communications, Phao Bunnaphon, declared that the bridge built with the Soviet Union's help is not only of economic but of historic importance as well. It is a symbol of the indestructible friendship between the peoples of Laos and the Soviet Union. The bridge across the Nam Ngum river is a symbol of the victory of our common effort. We have devoted it to the 30th anniversary of the formation of the PRP, the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the LPDR and the 40th anniversary of the Soviet people's victory in the Great Patriotic War.

The building of another bridge, across the turbulent and wayward tributary of the Mekong river, the Nam Kading, has even begotten legends. The residents of the village of Nam Kading refused to believe that the Soviet comrades--would ever succeed in harnessing the disobedient river whose water level rises by 15 or 16 metres in the monsoon season and its flood tide sweeps

away everything in its way.. The local peasants used to believe that a horrible dragon lived in the river who drags his victims off mercilessly into its depths. But when the new times came the dragon had to give in. Prospectors appeared in the Nam Kading valley, 200 kilometres east of Laos.

Soviet experts did this in extremely tough conditions. The fairytale master of the Nam Kading river, "the omnipotent dragon", tore down drilling installations and swept away the equipment, but prospectors put them back again and again. Finally the much-awaited victory was won. The "dragon" was fettered and the geologists gave way to the builders who will soon open traffic over a unique 350-metre long bridge.

Contacts between Laos and the Soviet Union are broad and many-sided, covering practically all aspects of life. The fruits of cooperation between the two countries are particularly tangible in Vientiane province where, with the internationalist assistance of Soviet experts the industrial projects essential for the Laotian economy have been built or are under construction. They include an oil depot, a motor vehicle repair shop and a station for repairing agricultural machines. They all do a good service to the country. A second hospital is under construction.

But the good pace of work, the great desire to overcome the century-old backwardness and build a happy future is not to the liking of all. The reactionary forces on the other side of the Mekong river, in neighbouring Thailand, make their presence felt from time to time. Sometimes the roaring of gun fire breaks the stillness of the night. Civilians die and great material loss is sustained. These provocations arouse legitimate indignation on the part of the Laotians who, together with other countries of Indochina--Vietnam and Kampuchea--are seeking to promote peace and stability in Southeast Asia. A statement to this effect made by the Laotian Foreign Ministry underlines, in particular, that the Bangkok ruling circles are pursuing a short-sighted policy following in the wake of the forces of imperialism and international reaction. These forces, the statement says, are doing whatever they can to aggravate the situation in Southeast Asia and regain the lost positions in the region. The government of the LPDR demands that an end be put to Thailand's armed provocations against the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and expects that a positive answer be given to the constructive proposals of the countries of Indochina aimed at turning Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability and goodneighbourliness, and at launching a constructive dialogue with the ASEAN countries.

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WESTERN EUROPE

CONCEPTIONS OF WAR AND PEACE IN VARIOUS IDEOLOGICAL MOVEMENTS

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[Article by I. B. Ponomareva and N. A. Smirnova: "Questions of War and Peace in Western European Ideological Conceptions"]

[Text] During the post-war decades the bourgeois ideology and politics underwent a number of substantial changes. This was brought about, in the first place, by the successes of the genuine socialist countries and, above all, the Soviet Union in solving socio-economic and political problems, in developing science, technology, and culture, as well as by the increase of socialism's attractiveness and its authority in the world. In the second place, it was caused by the widespread dissemination of the Marxist-Leninist ideas of the revolutionary transformation of society and the increasing assertion of the principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with differing social systems as a norm of international relations. In the third place, it was caused by the loss on the part of the imperialist powers, particularly the United States, of their leading role in the world, their inability to overcome crisis phenomena in the economy, social and political spheres, or to put up any positive alternative to socialism and its humane ideals.

In most of the countries of Western Europe there has been a serious shift in the balance of social and political forces. There has been an increase in their polarization, and a shift in the balance has arisen between opposing parties or blocs. The divergences between the principal socio-political groupings are increasing, and it is becoming much more difficult to conduct a "bi-partisan" policy and achieve a comparative unanimity within the ruling class. In the ruling circles themselves there is an increase of divergent views and an uncertainty in regard to the most important world problems. On the whole, there is a growth of political instability, which finds external expression in a decline of trust in the ruling conservative and reformist parties. A noticeable differentiation is occurring in the ranks of the social-democrats; a shifting to the Left has been noted in certain of the socialist parties. This is reflected in the positions taken by the Socialist International, which has been more actively advocating a policy of detente and social reforms, abandoning the most decrepit dogmas of anti-communism. There is an over-all weakening in the effectiveness of the evolved methods and mechanisms of power among the ruling class. In certain countries a restructuring of the party-state is proceeding apace, the struggle has reached new frontiers, and new prospects are opening up. In this connection, it has become very

important to conduct research on the programs of the most representative socio-political movements of recent years, to discover sober-minded and constructive approaches to global world problems, and, above all, to the problems of war and peace.

Examination of the social-democratic, neo-liberal, and neo-conservative ideological movements in Western Europe along with their attitudes toward the problems disturbing mankind is indeed the purpose of the present article.

* * *

In speaking about the movements which are opposed to Washington's course of confrontation and power politics, we should note, first of all, certain parties which have banded together in the Socialist International. The most influential of these within the Socialist International are the Western European Socialist and Social-Democratic Parties. In their own countries they occupy powerful positions as ruling or opposition parties, and they have a significant following among the workers and other laboring people. Their influence is also great in the trade unions and in the reformist type of international trade-union movement.

Questions of war and peace have occupied one of the central places in the Socialist International's activity throughout the entire period of its existence.

During the first few post-war years (prior to their uniting in the Socialist International) the Social-Democratic Parties declared that they intended to conduct a policy, independently of the ruling classes of the Western powers, aimed at not permitting a new world war. The central thesis of those years was the idea of creating in the world arena a so-called "third force," i.e., a "strong socialist (in the social-democratic sense--Author's note) Europe," standing between the United States and the USSR, capable of reconciling the contradictions existing between them and of guaranteeing peace throughout the entire world.¹ This idea did not reflect the class realities; it was illusory, but it did, to a certain extent, orient the social democrats to activity in the defense of peace and peaceful cooperation among states with differing social systems.

The "cold war" confronted the social-democrats with a difficult choice and brought about sharp conflicts within the movement itself. In the final analysis, the social-democratic concepts did not resist the myth of the "Soviet military threat," and the leaders of the right-wing social-democrats supported the aggressive policy of the Western powers, particularly that of the United States, in the international arena. This turn became obvious after the events of 1948 in Czechoslovakia and especially after the conclusion of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. The social-democrats as a whole departed from the policy of peace and friendship with the USSR, which they had proclaimed during the early post-war years, and they adopted a course in international affairs which supported the military-political alliances created by the Western powers. These alliances were supposed to encompass the countries of Western Europe, Asia, the Near East, Africa, and America.²

The fundamental positions of the Socialist International on the questions of global policy were formulated in a basic program document--the declaration entitled "On the Goals and Tasks of Democratic Socialism," as adopted at the Frankfurt Constituent Congress in 1951 and which has remained in effect to the present time. It proclaimed the following: "Preservation of peace throughout the entire world is the most urgent task of our time."³ However, in the program of the Socialist International there was no mention of condemning the aggressive policy of imperialism, the creation of military-political blocs, military bases on other people's territories, the policy of "cold war," stepping up the tension, and creating a threat to peace. At the same time it contained a "criticism" of genuine socialism and its foreign policy, while it absolved from the capitalist countries all blame for conflicts and wars: "The threats hanging over the independence of the nations comprise the direct cause engendering the danger of war in our time."⁴ These threats were ascribed to the Soviet Union. The Socialist International supported the line of the United States, directed at compelling the Western European countries to abandon independent national policies and sovereignty in favor of "Atlantic solidarity." The system of unlimited national sovereignty had to be refashioned to suit US interests. This was unambiguously stated in a special resolution entitled "The Unity of Europe," as adopted at the First Congress of the Socialist International. It not only supported the plans to "unify Europe," but also undertook an attempt to provide the theoretical grounds for the correctness and necessity of this policy. Put forward as one of the main proofs in defense of "unification" was the idea that "within the narrow national markets of the individual states it is impossible to solve all the economic and political problems," that for this purpose it is "necessary to go beyond" national sovereignty, and then "such a strengthening of Europe's unity will serve the interests of the entire world."⁵ Although the Socialist International did also recognize the first-rate importance of the task of preserving peace on Earth, with its characterization of the causes of international tension and the sources of the new military danger it distorted the true essence of the policy being followed by the socialist countries, while it presented the West's military programs as as a "defensive measure" in the face of "communist aggression."⁶ Thus, in the initial phase of its existence the Socialist International facilitated in all ways the militaristic policy of the Western powers headed up by the United States, whereas the attacks on the USSR and the communist movement, the accomodating position regarding the question of re-arming West Germany, the support by the French Socialists and the British Labor Party members of aggressive actions against national-liberation movements, the theses contained within its program concerning the "unification of Europe" and "collective security" have led, in fact, to an increasingly greater class grouping with imperialism and an increasingly more profound crisis of ideology within the ranks of this movement itself.

Under the influence of the shifts which took place in international life in the late 1960's and early 1970's, a "re-evaluation of values" also took place amidst the social-democrats. A number of leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties came to the conclusion that it was high time to leave the trenches of the "cold war" and take more independent and realistic positions. This allowed such parties as the SPD [Social-Democratic Party of Germany] [FRG], the French Socialist Party, the British Labor Party, and a number of others to make a definite contribution to the process of lessening international tension.

To the extent that a change occurred in the balance of power in the world arena in favor of socialism, a turning away from the "cold war" toward detente, an improvement in relations between East and West, and a setting forth of peace-loving, foreign-policy initiatives by the Soviet Union as well as by the other countries of the socialist community, the views of the Socialist International underwent a transformation in the direction of abandoning the one-sided ideas of a "closed unity" and "Atlantic solidarity" and again "took up their natural position in the middle."⁷

The over-all shifts in the world situation likewise influenced the evolution of the positions taken by the Socialist International's leadership. During the first few years of its existence the tone of the Socialist International was set by its numerically largest party--the British Labor Party. Even now this party plays a significant role in the Socialist International. However, advancing to the forefront in its organizational and political activities since the 1960's has been the Socialist Party of Austria, and since the 1970's --the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, whose chairman, W. Brandt, has been the chairman of the Socialist International from November 1976 to the present time. This did not occur by chance. The activity of the West German Social-Democrats was significant in working out the problems of social reformism, and the main thing was the turning of the Social-Democrats of one of the largest countries of Western Europe under the conditions of detente's development in the 1970's toward greater realism in international policy.

Events of the late 1970's and early 1980's have shown that the positive shifts revealed in the Socialist International's position regarding global political questions were not a temporary, random episode. Numerous resolutions and decisions made by the 13th--16th Socialist International Congresses, as well as meetings, conferences, and sessions of the Socialist International's Bureau have, on the whole, testified to the fact that definite positive changes have occurred and are occurring in its positions on foreign policy. Above all, the Socialist International has come to recognize the principles of peaceful coexistence, taking into consideration the fact that, under present-day conditions, war cannot be a means of achieving political goals, and that a "lasting and guaranteed peace is the sine qua non without which the implementation of the goals of democratic socialism would be impossible. Only the cooperation of all states, regardless of their social system, can ensure peace."⁸

A serious turn was also noted in the evaluation by the Socialist International's leaders of the USSR's foreign policy and its role in the international arena. They gave up treating the Soviet peace-loving policy as a "tactical maneuver," having recognized its organic, non-linkage interest in peace and detente.

Specific changes have taken place in the Socialist International's positions regarding European integration. The leaders of the Socialist International justify the necessity for this not as before--with references to the "Soviet threat," but rather by an attempt to make Western Europe independent of the "super-powers," having transformed it into an independent factor, capable of ensuring peace in Europe and throughout the world. Alarm with regard to the unceasing arms race has brought about a substantial activation of the attention paid by the Socialist International to the problems of limiting the arms

race and to disarmament; this is testified to by the positions which the Socialist International has formulated in favor of a military detente, as well as its support of negotiations and agreements in this field. In Helsinki in 1978 the Socialist International conducted a special conference regarding these problems. All these phenomena have become an important characteristic determining the Socialist International's strategy under present-day conditions.

However, along with the above-noted shifts, the Socialist International as an organization, as well as the parties and certain leaders within it, is still characterized by both an "Atlantic solidarity" and a prejudice in evaluating the USSR and the communist movement. It is likewise marked by a striving to dump on the USSR the blame for the arms race and a tendency to support certain of US foreign-policy actions. These factors have been brought about by anti-communist prejudices, the pressure of reactionary and imperialist circles, as well as by a firm and sometimes strong economic dependence of a number of Western countries on the United States.

The altered international situation during the last few years introduced definite adjustments in the Socialist International's program. In evaluating the situation which has evolved, the Socialist International proceeds from the fact that in the late 1970's and early 1980's the international situation has become abruptly more complicated, but it considers that, under these conditions, there is no sensible alternative to the policy of detente, and that it must be continued.

As regards evaluating the sources of the danger of war and the root causes of the worsening international situation, the fallacious concepts of the "equal responsibility of the two super-powers," albeit in a somewhat damped-down form, still manifest themselves; the problems of war and peace are often treated as the result of rivalry between the "two super-powers." Thus, demands to refrain from a position aimed at a "limited nuclear war," to seriously approach negotiations on disarmament, not to participate in plans for militarizing space, not to produce new types of weapons of mass destruction, and several others were addressed by the most recent Socialist International Congress, which was held in April 1983 in Albufera, in equal measure, to the United States and to the USSR.⁹ Moreover, it ignored the well-known fact that it is the USSR rather than the United States which is doing the maximum possible to eliminate the threat of war, above all, nuclear war.

In contrast to the "cold war" of the late 1940's and early 1950's, when the Western European Social-Democratic and Socialist Parties supported the policy of the United States, at the turn of the 1980's most of them critically regarded the "crusade" which Washington proclaimed against the socialist countries.¹⁰ Something else is also noteworthy: within the ranks of the social-democrats of many countries (which may be partially traced in the corresponding decisions of their parties), albeit gradually, there is, nonetheless, a growing recognition of the fact that the threat to Europe and the world does not come from the USSR but rather from the militaristic aspirations of the American administration. Thus, for example, this was reflected in the FRG in the decisions of the SPD in Essen in May 1984, which contained a definite criticism of the military strategy of the present American administration and conveyed the thought of the necessity for cooperation between East and West in the matter of providing security.¹¹

At the time of the visit to the USSR of the SPD's chairman and the Socialist International's chairman, W. Brandt, in May 1985 M. S. Gorbachev emphasized that the "positions expressed in the SPD documents...against the 'Star Wars' plans, in favor of restraining the arms race and reducing weapons, above all, nuclear weapons, for concluding between the countries of the East and West a Treaty on the Mutual Non-Use of Force, for putting a stop to outside interference in the affairs of sovereign countries and peoples, for halting military conflicts and aggressive adventures in various regions of the world...our ideas are harmonious in many respects concerning the present-day world and the tasks required to improve it."¹²

Nevertheless, in the sphere of ideological and class struggle in the world arena the international Social-Democrats occupy positions which are far from neutral. They emphasize their adherence to "Western democracy," to the so-called "freedoms" in the bourgeois sense of that word, and they declare the presence of commonly shared political ideals with the United States, although in a number of their statements the Social-Democrats assert that they are not advocates of transferring ideological differences into the sphere of interstate relations.

Of key importance at the present time is the task of keeping space unmilitarized, as well as limiting and reducing nuclear weapons. It has become even more acute because of the additional deployment in a number of Western European countries of new American first-strike nuclear-armed missiles. The documents of the 15th (1980) and 16th (1983) Socialist International Congresses noted that the parties included in NATO consider the solution of the disarmament problem to be the most important task not only from the viewpoint of ensuring international security and peace but also from the viewpoint of more effectively solving the problems of developing the African, Asian, and Latin American countries. This idea found well-known reflection in the documents of the Commission on Questions of International Development under the chairmanship of W. Brandt; the principal results of its work were approved by the Socialist International.¹³

The Socialist International recognizes the importance of working out measures of control and verification, limiting the export of arms, and banning the sale of weapons to countries engaged in international conflicts. It has also noted the importance of reducing military expenditures. The Socialist International supports the efforts of the UN in the field of disarmament.¹⁴

The Socialist International and the parties included within it have officially recognized the importance of the problem of limiting and reducing nuclear weapons as one of the central problems in present-day international life. "The nuclear arms race," it is pointed out in the documents of the 16th Socialist International Congress, "constitutes a mortal danger for mankind." This congress's documents contain an appeal to all the nuclear powers, above all, to the United States and the USSR, to proceed to an "effective disarmament" in the given field.¹⁵

Extremely indicative in this connection is the position taken by the Social-Democratic Parties of most of the Western European countries regarding implementation of the so-called "Strategic Defense Initiative" by the United States

in space. Because they understand what dangerous and unpredictable consequences might arise for mankind in general and for the Western European nations in particular if the United States carries out the militarization of space, the Social-Democrats have called upon the governments of their own countries to oppose these plans.

Emphasizing that the "American plan would bring about more harm than benefit, both for relations between East and West as well as for relations within the Western alliance,"¹⁶ the parties of the Socialist International are alarmed by the fact that the United States is conducting Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva without altering its own course.

While they advocate, on the whole, a constructive solution to the problem of space weapons and emphasize that the results of this discussion will determine the outcome of the negotiations on limiting nuclear-armed strategic weapons and medium-range weapons, the parties of the Socialist International are far from being unanimous in their approach to the problems listed above.

The positions taken by various Social-Democratic Parties with regard to these questions have manifested negative tendencies as well as symptoms of a definite positive evolution in the views of some parties which deserve our attention, although they are not consistent in all respects.

As regards the negative tendencies, here we can note, first of all, the approach taken by the leaders of the French socialists. From the very beginning they have attempted to prove that the deployment of the new American nuclear missiles in a number of Western European countries is necessary, as it were, in order to overcome the military superiority in such weapons which the USSR supposedly possesses. And they have held to such a line within the Socialist International. The French socialists likewise approved the beginning of the deployment of the American missiles, unwaveringly emphasizing that any "genuine negotiations" on this question could have good prospects only after the United States restores an "equilibrium." They have constantly opposed the taking into account of French and British nuclear weapons in the negotiations.¹⁷

On the other hand, it is now important to keep in mind that in recent years a number of the Socialist International's influential parties, above all, parties from the countries of Northern and Central Europe, have taken a completely different position. Moreover, among them there are some such as the SPD, for example, which had previously fully supported the line of American imperialism in the important questions of military strategy, in particular, with regard to the question of deploying the new American missiles.

Progressive international public opinion has received the results of the latest SPD Congress with satisfaction, in particular, the condemnation of the deployment of American nuclear missiles in the FRG and the aspiration to reduce the risk of the FRG being involved in a nuclear conflict.¹⁸ Furthermore, the Social-Democratic Party called upon the government of H. Kohl to decisively disassociate itself from Reagan's "Star Wars" plans. In the debates which took place on 8 November 1984 in the Bundestag a faction of the SPD introduced a resolution proposing to approve a draft of an international treaty banning space weapons and thereby preventing the shifting of the arms race into space.

G. Scheer, a representative of this faction, drew attention to the fact that the draft of the treaty was based on a text which had been worked out and approved by a congress of natural scientists held in July 1984 in the West German city of Gottingen.¹⁹ Several hundred well-known specialists who had assembled there from various countries, including the USSR and the United States, directed an appeal to international public opinion to do everything so as not to allow the shifting of the arms race into space.

Also deserving of attention are the decisions of the British Labor Party, which at its most recent conference adopted a document entitled "Defense and Security for Britain," which pointed to the need for constructing a national defense system on a non-nuclear foundation and for removing any nuclear weapons from British territory.²⁰

Analogous thoughts were expressed at the latest congress of the PASOK [Panhellenic Socialist Movement Party], which made a positive evaluation of the Soviet Union's foreign policy and its peace-loving initiatives. Moreover, it condemned Washington's course, aimed at exacerbating the international situation and escalating the arms race.

An important place in the program of the Socialist International is allotted to its attitude toward the anti-war movement. The position of the Socialist International and the parties belonging to it has undergone a definite evolution on this question. Initially, and right down to the end of the 1970's, the Socialist International strove not to take a specific line with regard to the growing mass anti-war movement. But as the latter gained strength and the situation in the world became more and more tense, the Socialist International was compelled to alter its own position. The adherents of the peace movement, as officially declared by W. Brandt, the chairman of the Socialist International, in the spring of 1983, "are not our foes. I regard them as our allies on the road to the same goal."²¹

This change in the Socialist International's official position is explained by the fact that the mass anti-war movement had taken on such a scale and scope that it was no longer possible to ignore it. Furthermore, without even waiting for the decisions of the Socialist International, and frequently despite their own leadership, an increasingly greater number of rank-and-file Social-Democrats have joined this movement.

At the same time--and this is extremely essential--the Socialist International, while officially positive in its evaluation of the anti-war movement as a whole, is striving to strengthen its own influence within it, to restrain the movement within the framework which it needs in accordance with its own overall ideological-political positions. The Socialist International's leaders, for example, assert that the international Social-Democratic movement is, so to speak, the only consistent force in the struggle for peace. They frequently accompany support for the anti-war movement with various types of stipulations. They declare that the anti-war movement should not be "one-sided," i.e., it must be directed against nuclear weapons in the East and in the West.²²

However, with regard to the anti-war movement of recent years, it must be emphasized that many parties of the Socialist International have played no small

role, and they comprised one of the factors which have influenced the conduct of the United States and the other NATO countries. This pertains to the SPD, the decisions of whose congress could facilitate the development of the anti-war movement, as well as the programs of the British Labor Party, whose fundamental positions were also affirmed at the Socialist International's international conference held in Brussels in April 1985.

The CPSU maintains contacts with many Socialist, Social-Democratic, and Labor Parties, as well as with the Socialist International. On several occasions the CPSU Central Committee has sent letters to the leadership of these parties regarding urgent questions of foreign policy; it has established the practice of holding consultations with the leaders of the SPD and a number of other parties--on the highest level when necessary. Thus, in March 1985 a meeting was held between the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, M. S. Gorbachev, and the Socialist International's Consultative Council on Disarmament, and in May 1985--talks with its chairman, W. Brandt.

In making the transition to characterizing present-day bourgeois liberalism, it should be emphasized that it too, like the Social-Democratic movement, at times has manifested a sober-minded approach to the changes in the balance of forces in the international arena. Many bourgeois liberals advocate detente and cooperation between states with differing social systems.

The history of liberalism--one of the leading currents of bourgeois reformism--covers more than one and a half centuries. Formed as an ideological and political doctrine during the first half of the 19th century, liberalism inscribed on its banner the slogan of defending parliamentary liberties and the civil rights of the individual; in the economic field it advocated the freedom of private-enterprise activity and competition; it argued for the non-interference of the state in economic life as well as in the relations between labor and capital. However, already by the end of the century, with the "ripening" of the Social-Democratic concepts of re-structuring society, the "traditional" liberalism became a conservative political force. History itself introduced extremely substantive adjustments in the principal positions of the liberal ideologists: capitalism's entrance into its imperialist stage was accompanied by a sharp intensification of the state's interference in the economy and by a new development of its functions in the political, social, and ideological spheres. After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia a new element arose in the policy and ideology of bourgeois liberalism--a position aimed at creating an alternative to an actually existing socialist society, on the one hand, and opposition to the strengthened and formed trend of social reformism within the framework of the capitalist system--on the other hand. The second task was all the more difficult for the liberals in that the logic of the political events of the first half of the 20th century, the internal political development of the capitalist states, as well as the crisis condition of their economies, caused by the unprecedented scale and profound social-class mutations in the structure of society and its economic basis, moved to the foreground at this time not the liberal ideas, constituting the concepts of bourgeois reformism, but rather the social-reformist ideas. Liberalism was essentially crowded out and, to a well-known degree, proved to be not up to its tasks.

As a current of political thought, liberalism was right up against the question of its self-preservation and of maintaining, under the conditions of the altered circumstances, its own "moderate" and "middle-of-the-road" positions between social reformism, on the one hand, and conservatism--on the other hand. It had to define more accurately and precisely the target goals and ideological fundamentals of this variant of reformism. In addition to the problem of ideological "self-identification," the agenda also included the question of the organizational consolidation of the liberal-reformist trend--at first within the framework of the political systems of the West's big capitalist countries, and in the future on the international level as well. Here the liberal theoreticians and ideologists were confronted with the need to substantially revise the entire complex of traditional liberal ideological-theoretical views in practically all the basic fields--economics, domestic and foreign policy, culture, etc.

This ideological political trend was the result of an objective rebirth of "classical" liberalism amid the circumstances of global political shifts, especially after World War II, when economic theorists, political scientists, and philosophers proclaimed the emergence and formation in the West of the so-called "industrial society with its inherently characteristic economic, political, socio-cultural, and class parameters."²³ The economic views of liberalism were subjected to the greatest changes. Thus, in the present-day "new" liberalism the classical economic position advocating a "self-regulating, free, market economy" by necessity was supplemented and, to a large extent, was adusted by modernized Keynesian ideas, combined with the concept of a "progressive technocracy."²⁴

On the whole, neo-liberalism regards the present-day capitalist society as a more or less acceptable structure, which, in one way or another, answers the needs of the individual, although the society is not always or in everything just to him and has a definite number of those who have been "passed over," along with those who "while not making a contribution to the group efforts in the area of socio-economic development, have been able to occupy a comfortable place."²⁵

Such an indefinite statement of the imperfections of the social structure, albeit gradually, does, nevertheless, pose the question of changing the existing status quo. In this question neo-liberalism relies on its technocratic views, according to which changes and reforms must be based, in the first place, on the achievements of the Scientific and Technical Revolution. In the second place, they must be the product of a "wise and balanced policy" of socio-economic "concord" and a "social dialogue" between the working people, the entrepreneurs, and the state authorities. The idea of class struggle is utterly rejected, as is also, by the way, the very fact of the existence of classes in society.

The former liberal concept of the state has undergone a definite change. Although in the neo-liberal usage the thesis resounds as urgently as before that the "new-style social state remains the founding element of a free society"²⁶ and constitutes a unique kind of "arbitrator," a disinterested, impartial judge in solving socio-economic problems, the neo-liberals, with their characteristically contradictory ideological views, on the one hand, call for

a more powerful and "strong" state, necessary under the conditions of a state-monopolistic management of the economy. On the other hand, they have not given up their old slogan of "Less state!", fearing limitations on the field of activity of the "market economy" and infringements on the interests of that portion of the present-day bourgeoisie which they represent.

The neo-liberal foreign-policy program likewise bears the imprint of internal contradiction. If in their domestic policy the neo-liberals proclaim the slogan of "Less state!", their foreign-policy doctrine is heralded by the call for "More Europe!" As a rule, the new liberalism closely connects the Europeanist line with the aim of expanding the political and military cooperation between the United States and Western Europe and strengthening the North Atlantic bloc. European neo-liberals have insisted particularly on conducting a "joint policy of security" within the framework of "Atlantic solidarity," as well as on better coordination between the foreign and domestic policies of the Western countries. Nevertheless, in recent times the "liberal alternative" in the field of foreign policy has undergone certain changes. It has brought forth these regarding the need to lessen international tension, to resolve conflicts peacefully, develop economic cooperation among states with differing social systems, carrying out the Helsinki accords and principles, and encouraging detente.

The neo-liberal program formally mentions the need to achieve a "balanced, controllable, and effective arms reduction."²⁷ Here one can clearly trace the immanent contradictions of neo-liberal thought concerning global political questions, and one can speak, in general, only provisionally about the "code" or "program" of neo-liberalism regarding international problems. Thus, if some of the neo-liberals from the neutral and non-aligned countries advocate the banning of nuclear weapons and their non-proliferation, the creation of "nuclear-free zones," the liberal parties and circles of a number of NATO member-countries render full support for that bloc's military measures and, in particular, to the plans for deploying the new types of American nuclear missiles in Western Europe. For example, at their assemblies in 1982 and 1983 the British Liberal Party passed over this question in silence. However, the documents of the assembly which was held in Bournemouth (September 1984) contains a demand for the immediate withdrawal of all guided missiles from the territory of Britain and unconditionally rejected the program for equipping British submarines with Trident missiles. While affirming their adherence to the country's participating in NATO, the Liberals at the same time expressed their intention of pursuing a policy of "changing the strategic concepts" of this bloc. What they are talking about, in particular, is a rejection of the military policy providing for the capability of inflicting a first nuclear strike, and about making the transition to a strategy of "non-nuclear defense."²⁸

A central place in the neo-liberal program is occupied by the field of "European construction," which constitutes the foundation for a "security policy" as well as a development policy." The most sober-minded Western European neo-liberals proceed in their European activity from the necessity, in the first place, of defining the position of the NATO countries in their relations with the USSR and removing the "inter-Atlantic contradictions" with the United States by means of achieving a sensible compromise; in the second place,

exerting "permanent and intensive" pressure on the "super-powers"; in the third place, demonstrating to a potential enemy (to their way of thinking--the USSR and the other socialist countries) a preparedness for defense. Thereby in the "liberal alternative" for Western Europe they assign to the old continent a role not so much as an "intermediary" or a "third force," as much as a "translator," "explaining to the East the interests of the West, and also insisting that its needs be respected."²⁹

Like the other major ideological-political trends in the capitalist countries, present-day liberalism grouped together in 1947 within the framework of the so-called Liberal International, which includes bourgeois reformist parties and individuals who are striving to "strengthen capitalism by means of widely disseminating the ideas and principles of bourgeois liberalism."³⁰ Uniting in their ranks national liberal parties and factions from 19 countries, as well as individual members, the Liberal International advocates the defense of a "society of free enterprise," based on a respect for "individual liberties, social justice, the observance of humanistic principles, and defense of the sovereign rights of peoples."³¹ Even the choice of the declared principles testifies to the fact that the preservative function of present-day liberalism outweighs, on the whole, the reformative one.

During recent years in the highest echelons of power of the leading NATO countries, above all, the United States, as well as Britain and the FRG, there has been a triumph of the ideology of conservatism (neo-conservatism, ultra-conservatism, right-wing conservatism). The liberals and the social-democrats have been shoved off the front stage of political life, having been blamed for their "tolerant attitude toward communism." According to the assertions by the conservatism, the "philosophy of liberalism has completely exhausted itself."

The upsurge of neo-conservative ideas during the late 1970's and early 1980's was a reaction of the most aggressive circles of imperialism to the inability to win the historical competition with socialism by peaceful means under the conditions of detente. A mass campaign of anti-detente and "psychological warfare" was begun. It was asserted that, as a result of detente, the West had embarked on a path toward "unilateral ideological disarmament." Put forth as a counter-weight was the policy of militarism, the arms race, and the absolutely hopeless idea of achieving military superiority over the Soviet Union.

In order to increase the prestige of the anti-democratic program under the conditions which had taken shape during the early and mid-1970's, it was also important to recruit new forces among certain social strata in the capitalist countries for strengthening the mass base of the existing conservative parties and movements. In the circumstances which had evolved the "emergence" of conservatism constituted an attempt at an ideological response to the left-wing liberal, reformist, and social-democratic programs which over the course of the preceding 15--20 years had been carried out in a number of Western countries with one degree of success or another. Taking advantage of the mistakes made by the reformist programs, neo-conservatism at the crest of the criticism of the social-democratic "crisis" set itself the goal of halting the development of Western society in the direction of further social and political reforms. At this same time the conservatives attempted to transform a "set" of

quite motley right-wing conservative concepts into an integrated system of views for which an attempt was undertaken to make the renovated and "arranged" conservative ideas into an all-encompassing world-view with adjustments made for the situation. Otherwise the task of creating a firm base for the global organization of the neo-conservative trend would have been impossible to resolve. This was noted on more than one occasion in his works by G. K. Kaltenbrunner, one of the founders of the new conservatism.³²

Most of the leaders and theoreticians of neo-conservatism pay principal attention to the following three fields: economics, culture, and politics.

In the economic sphere the basic positions for the neo-conservatives are "anti-statism," i.e., the exclusion of any strong-willed interference by the state in managing the economy, on the one hand, and stimulating the "market economy" and private enterprise--on the other hand. Yet another trait of neo-conservatism's socio-economic program is the struggle against the supposedly inflated state allocations of funds for social needs. It proposes to redistribute the GNP in the interests of the entrepreneurs and, at the same time, to cut the budgetary funds being allocated for the social security of the working people. The socio-economic views of the new conservatism also include a postulate on "social solidarity and partnership," i.e., a rejection of the class struggle in combination with an all-out defense of society's chief institution--private property ownership. Certain theoreticians name R. Reagan and M. Thatcher as included among the "classical" neo-conservatives. In the opinion of many economists and political scientists, the course conducted by the governments of the United States and Britain in recent years have engendered economic disorders, chronic unemployment, a decline in production, all of which is fraught with a future danger of a serious undermining of economic potential as a whole and the devastation of society's social structures.

In the political-cultural field the neo-conservatives make much ado about the problem of the moral-political crisis which has engulfed the present-day "industrial" society of the Western countries and which has manifested itself, in particular, as they think, in places where liberals and social-democrats have been in power. Aiming at an unlimited economic growth and an incessant, thoughtless consumption has brought about in the neo-conservatives a disenchantment with regard to the directions and, what is the main thing, the results of a political-economic and spiritual development of society which has expressed itself in a universal alienation and a "crisis of faith." Complaints that "morality...and life style have become corrupted"³³ are organically supplemented by a criticism of present-day science with its cult of technology and a progressivism "with blinders on," giving rise, among other disorders, to considerable ecological difficulties. The "salvation" of contemporary Western society from its moral-political-economic crisis, in the opinion of the neo-conservatives, is possible by way of a return to an order which is "healthy" and "strong" in traditions.³⁴ In perceiving contemporary civilization as, above all, unspiritual, consumption-oriented, and, on the whole, "unhealthy," the new conservatism on the path to restoring health and returning to the moral and cultural values of the past have thrown across a dangerous little bridge to the fallacious idea of "adapting" these values and ideals to the realities of the present day. This is precisely how the new conservatism has been combined with a nostalgia for the past and the former conservative

doctrine of the "big stick" and the "old" Pan-Germanic revanchism. This obvious fact cannot be obscured even by the neo-conservatives' diversionary-academic discussion of the need to abandon the "anthropocentric" picture of the world's structure and to make the transition to "ecologism."³⁵

An extremely important component of the views held by neo-conservative circles is their foreign-policy program. Their global political concepts are openly anti-communist and anti-socialist in nature and are directed at creating a broad front of all right-wing forces in order to "hurl back" communism and preserve the capitalist system. Neo-conservatives consider the Soviet Union and left-wing, radical "destroyers of the system" to be their principal "conceptual" opponents in the world arena. In this connection, an attempt is being made to put a religious and moral foundation under all the basic problems of the present day. Hence the calls to anathematize "Godless Communism," to proclaim a "crusade" against it, and to evaluate the most diverse events in the world by categories of a perversely interpreted "Good and Evil."³⁶ Interference by the United States in the internal affairs of sovereign states is depicted as performing a "moral duty" sent down by God. Political regulation of problems has been replaced by sanctimonious moralizing and rhetoric, which, as a rule, are followed by the use of crude force or the threat of force.³⁷

In rejecting the principles of peaceful co-existence and cooperation between states with differing social systems, neo-conservatism has become the number one enemy of the policy of detente. The leitmotif of the neo-conservatives' global political views is the assertion of the "Soviet military threat" to the Western world along with calls to increase NATO's military-nuclear might. It is precisely within this context that the present-day conservatives approach the problem of the American nuclear presence in Western Europe, in particular, the deployment of medium-range missiles. The resolution of the historical dispute between capitalism and socialism, in the opinion of many, though far from all, conservatives, must take place on a nuclear battlefield.³⁸

Neo-conservatism is going all out to ideologize foreign policy, attempting to ideologically reinforce its policy of acting from a "position of strength." For the most part, the neo-conservative foreign-policy views are over-simplified and, as a rule, claim to encompass all the most complex questions of the present day. According to these schemes, mankind is divided into "foes" and "friends" of the "free and democratic" society, while the world evil is personified by "international communism," headed up by the USSR. Among the neo-conservative political leaders military thinking very often prevails over political thinking; this dooms the West to the arms race and the economic hardships connected with it, along with the destruction of many foreign- and domestic-policy achievements. Standing out in the greatest and most visible relief is the contradictory nature of the neo-conservative program as seen in the foreign-policy course followed by the United States, Britain, and the FRG, where conservative groups are in power. The line aimed at a confrontation with the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community has weakened Western Europe economically and politically, making it, at the same time, bound as a kind of nuclear hostage of the United States. The course directed at revitalizing NATO which is being conducted by the neo-conservatives is inevitably provoking measures in response from the Warsaw Pact Organization, while the medium-range missiles which have been deployed in Europe lower the threshold

of security not only for the European region but also for the entire world. The very attempt by the United States to return to its undivided world domination in economics, technology, and arms during a period of nuclear parity considerably intensifies the risk of a world catastrophe. While exhibiting concern for "ecologizing" present-day society and lamenting the latter's ruinous treatment of the natural environment, the neo-conservatives here hardly seem to recognize that their foreign policy is fraught with a global, not merely an ecological, catastrophe. In proclaiming the thesis of "human rights," they frequently by their own actions refuse to give humans confidence that they will be able to realize the most important right--the right to life.

In recent times the attempt to broaden and strengthen the neo-conservative movement on a world scale has dictated more and more strongly to its representatives and adepts the necessity to conduct a more coordinated and organized global political activity. It is precisely within this context that we must examine the attempts to create a "world" organizations of conservatives. The main thrust here is the establishment of close contacts among already-existing organizations. Thus, the year 1978 witnessed the formation of a "conservative international" for Western Europe--the European Democratic Union (EDU), which included during its first phase 11 Conservative, Christian-Democratic, and other right-wing parties from the Western European countries.³⁹ In the ensuing year the EDU gradually expanded by means of including, with the rights of associate members, the "related" organizations of other countries and regions, in particular, those of Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.

Taking place parallel with the expansion of the EDU were preparations for the creation of yet another organization, but one which would be truly international in scope and not merely a regional organization. As a result, the International Democratic Union (IDU) came into being in 1982. It includes Conservatives from Britain and Christian Democrats from the FRG, Italy, the French Rally for the Republic, as well as Liberal Parties from Japan, Canada, and other countries. The task of both organizations is to prepare a "right-wing" international as a well-formed, international organization, universal in its scope.

Up to the present time both the EDU and the IDU constitute extremely amorphous formations. There are not too many close ties between their members; on the contrary, there are sometimes substantial differences, and this does not enable these organizations to become adequate and effective counter-weights to the Socialist International. Thus, along with parties from the NATO and EDU countries, for example, it includes certain political parties from a number of neutral countries: the Christian Democrats of Italy and the Benelux group do not participate in its work, since they consider the EDU positions too far right; with regard to the questions of military equilibrium, detente, and disarmament, the parties from the neutral and non-aligned countries have more than once expressed their own separate opinions.

Markist studies have noted that the decisive factor for understanding conservatism is its class basis and functions, performed by it within the system of imperialism as an ideological weapon of the monopolistic bourgeoisie and all its reactionary allies.⁴⁰ Its contemporary variant--neo-conservatism--with all its particular traits, likewise reflects the interests of the most

reactionary and militaristically minded circles of the West and constitutes one of the characteristic symptoms in the crisis of bourgeois ideology.

Let's sum up the over-all results. Analysis of the positions taken by the Socialist International and the neo-liberals with regard to certain urgent questions of the present day has shown that, on the whole, these movements amid the circumstances of mass, anti-war demonstrations are ever-increasingly recognizing the danger of thermo-nuclear war. Officially they advocate its prevention by way of political detente and putting a halt to the arms race. On a number of questions the anti-war positions of the Socialist International and the Liberal International have opened up specific new possibilities for mobilizing world public opinion in the defense of peace. In certain countries of the West (especially in Britain, the FRG, the Netherlands, and Belgium) by the present time there has been a disruption of the former unanimity between the openly bourgeois and social-democratic parties on the important questions of world politics.

We must, however, take into account the fact that in the positions of the Socialist International and the Liberal International there is still quite a bit of inconsistency, contradictions, erroneous and unfounded evaluations, dictated by the fundamental class and social views of its participants. On the one hand, they manifest serious unrest over the worsening international situation; they criticize more openly the Reagan administration, its military plans and actions in Central America and South Africa. Many social-democratic leaders are active in the struggle against the arms race and for peace. But also present is the obvious attempt by certain Western circles to utilize the participation of the social-democrats in the anti-war movement in order to blunt in it the anti-imperialist, anti-American moods. In particular, the leaders of such Socialist Parties as the Portuguese and French are striving to turn the Socialist International in the stream-bed of support for a pro-American course.

The evolution of these movements depends, in the final analysis, not only on the processes taking place in the Social-Democratic and Liberal Parties themselves but also on the entire course of the opposition in the international arena between socialism and imperialism, on the changes in the over-all disposition of the class and political forces in the individual capitalist countries. In the struggle to reduce the danger of war and to strengthen peace the Soviet Union is prepared for broad and active cooperation with all states and with all peace-loving social forces. This also pertains entirely to the parties included within the Socialist International.

With regard to neo-conservatism, we must emphasize once again that it was formed as an anti-communist, anti-democratic, anti-liberal movement. The practical implementation of neo-conservatism's ideas would be a reaction along all lines. The ideology of anti-communism does not allow the neo-conservatives to objectively evaluate the political realities of the times. Such an ideology, particularly if it is expressed in the politics of government, is extremely dangerous.

Activation of the neo-conservative ideology, expressing the interests of the right-wing elite in the capitalist countries, has emerged in our time as one of the manifestations of imperialism's spiritual crisis, its inability to overcome its inherent amorality, alienation of the individual personality, social demagoguery, and its inability to resolve the antagonisms inherent in the bourgeois system. The deepening of this crisis testifies to the steady growth of the influence shown by the ideas of peace and socialism.

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WESTERN EUROPE

FINLAND'S FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER DENIES TRADE SHIFT TOWARD WEST

LD182354 Moscow TASS in English 2209 GMT 18 Dec 85

[Text] Moscow, December 18 TASS--Finland's commercial relations with the Soviet Union develop successfully, a TASS correspondent was told by Finland's Minister of Foreign Trade Jermu Laine who heads the delegation of his country at commercial negotiations in Moscow.

Twenty percent of Finland's foreign trade is with the Soviet Union, the minister said. The further increase of the trade turnover is expected. Finnish firms would like to export more goods to the USSR, but this would require an adequate increase of the import. And Finland is striving to diversify its purchases from the USSR, is making a quest for new forms of cooperation, Jermu Laine said.

Thus, the volume of the import of natural gas from the USSR might double in the years ahead. The purchases of coal, chemicals, finished goods from the USSR will grow. The import of Soviet machinery and equipment will increase substantially which is largely explained by intensive development of production and cooperation of Finnish and Soviet enterprises.

Rumors that appeared in the Western press about the alleged shift of Finland's foreign trade toward the West to the detriment of the USSR are absolutely groundless, the minister said. Finland intends to participate in some European programs, but the Soviet Union was and remains Finland's main trading partner.

The principle of the balance of bilateral trade that is at the basis of trade with the USSR proves its validity, the minister said. Long-term agreements between the two countries enable Finnish firms to take into consideration in advance the requirements of Soviet partners, to distribute more rationally capital investments and jobs.

Scientific and technical ties with the USSR are developing successfully. Soviet and Finnish scientists are cooperating in the spheres of space exploration, electronics, robotics. No other country with the market-oriented economy has similar experience of cooperation with the USSR and we appreciate the advantages of such contacts, Jermu Laine said.

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CSO: 1812/58

WESTERN EUROPE

USSR, FINLAND SIGN 1986 TRADE PROTOCOL

LD200741 Moscow TASS in English 2050 GMT 19 Dec 85

[Text] Moscow, December 19 TASS--Trade between the Soviet Union and Finland is to grow by more than 6 percent in 1986, as compared with 1985, and will exceed 5,000 million roubles, in accordance with the protocol on mutual deliveries between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Finland which has been signed here today by the Foreign Trade Ministers Boris Aristov and Jermu Laine.

Soviet exports will amount to 2,600 million roubles, with oil and oil products to remain the dominant items, as before. The Soviet gas export will grow by 50 percent. Deliveries of electricity will increase. Deliveries of Soviet machinery and equipment are to grow by 70 percent, deliveries under agreements on integration of production between Soviet organizations and Finnish firms are to more than double. The volume of services, being rendered by the Soviet Union on Finland's territory, will also grow, this including construction of gas pipelines and electric power stations.

The pattern of Soviet imports from Finland will in the main remain unchanged. Machinery, equipment and ships will account for more than half of its cost (1,200 million roubles). Finnish firms will continue constructing various industrial structures on the Soviet territory. Their cost is expected to amount to 160 million roubles. Deliveries of timber and paper products, ferrous metal rolled stock, electric cables will grow. Farm imports are to remain at the level of 1984.

Jermu Laine, who made a speech at the protocol signing ceremony, stressed the great significance of the export of consumer goods to the USSR. The document provides for a 40 percent rise in deliveries of clothes and knitted wear to the USSR, a 20 percent rise in footwear deliveries. Soviet orders will help create new jobs in the industry which is of great significance for the country's economy, said the minister.

The quest for new forms of cooperation between partners will continue, including in the sphere of realization of compensation agreements, development of integration of production in industry.

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CSO: 1812/58

WESTERN EUROPE

BRIEFS

USSR-FINLAND: TOURISM AGREEMENT--A cooperation agreement in tourism between Finland and the USSR for the years 1986-90 was signed in Moscow today. The agreement provides for the expansion in places of travel. Finnish tourists can see the Caucasus, visit Belorussia and Moldavia, and also the Central Asian republics. Soviet tourists on the other hand, can travel to East and North Finland. Travel possibilities by car, on the Baltic and on the Saimaa Canal are expanded. Next year Finnish tourists can fly non-stop from Finland to Sochi, Yalta, Kiev, Tbilisi and Tashkent. [Text] [Moscow International Service in Finnish 1530 GMT 13 Dec 85 LD] /12858

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